Illustration

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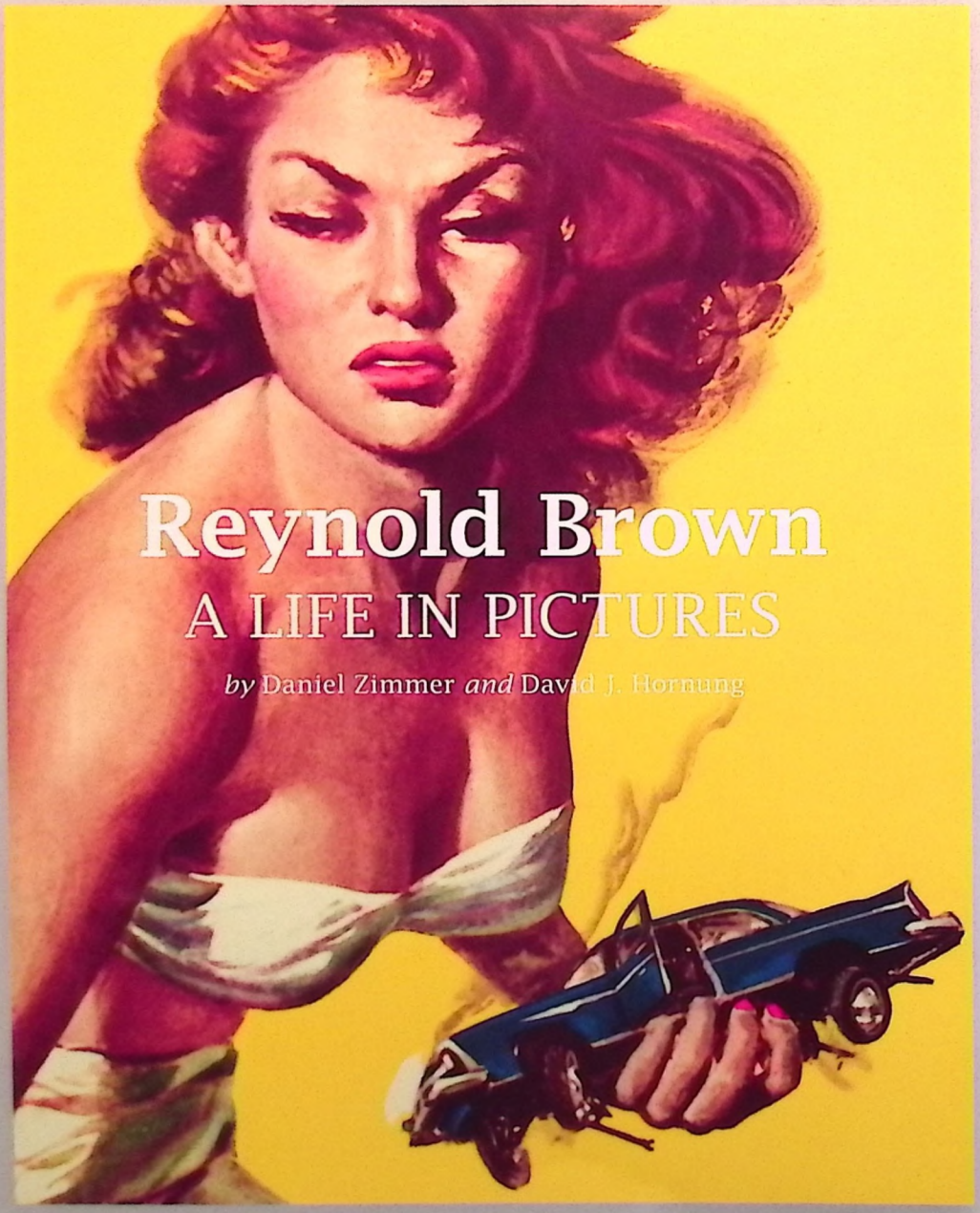

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Illustration

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From the Editor...

Welcome to another spectacular issue! We've had a lot of things brewing over here at The Illustrated Press lately, and I can't wait to fill you in on some of the details... First off, our long-awaited books *Norman Saunders* and *Reynold Brown: A Life in Pictures* are finally available *right now*. We've had a few unfortunate delays with the production of the Saunders book, and I must apologize to those of you who ordered early and had to wait a few months for delivery. Your patience is truly appreciated. All of the books have finally arrived and are available and shipping immediately. If you haven't visited my web sites for awhile, I would like to encourage all of you with internet access to take a look at some of the thumb-nail previews and other information online. You can view every page in both books, and you may also order directly online with your credit card. EVERYONE who is reading this should seriously consider ordering these books. Not only are you supporting our efforts in publishing more such books in the future, you will also be getting a fantastic value for your money. Each of these volumes is jam-packed with fantastic artwork, and they are both very reasonably priced at only $39.95 (plus $5 shipping.) Check 'em out!

As mentioned in the previous issue, we have also produced an extremely limited promotional trading-card set to go along with the Norman Saunders book. Our print run of 1000 copies is almost gone already, and they are selling like hot-cakes, so if you don't want to miss out please order your set right away! I'm not kidding! For the true die-hard fan, we also have a small quantity of *uncut sheets*, the holy grail of trading card collecting. I've got about 20 of these sheets left, and they are selling for $100 each postage paid. They will ship rolled in a durable tube.

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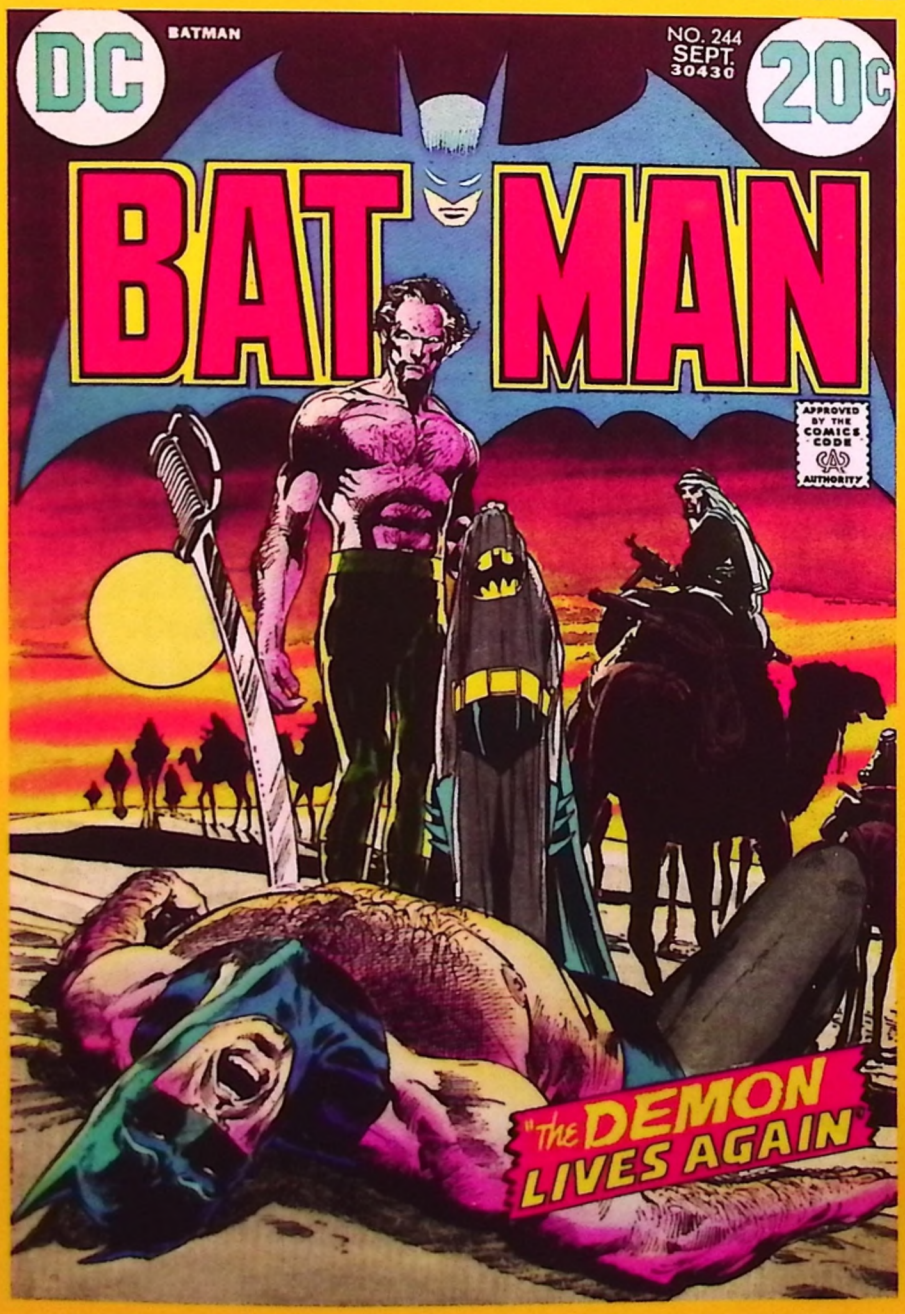

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Letters to the Editor:

Dear Dan:

Although I thoroughly enjoy every issue of *Illustration* magazine and read them from cover to cover, including the advertisements, the last publication was mesmerizing.

Mort Künstler's life and career were fascinating, and M. Stephen Doherty's biography was interesting, informative, and very well written. But the crowning achievement was the artwork—it was magnificent. I felt like I was walking through a museum.

Dan, I know that producing this magazine on a continuing basis is a monumental task, but I commend you on creating one of the best art magazines ever.

Thanks and best wishes,
Dr. Donald S.
Philadelphia, PA

Mr. Zimmer,

I am a current subscriber of your fine magazine and have all of the issues since the very first one. I want to take a moment of your time to just let you know how much your magazine brings so much enjoyment to my life. Your sense of design is perfect, and the articles are really inspiring, informative, and overall, excellent. I hope this magazine continues for years to come.

Being that I live in Canada, my subscription is a bit pricier, but let me tell you, it is well worth every Canadian dollar. I will continue supporting the magazine and your company because your publications (all of them) show how much respect and honour you have for the craft of illustration.

Thank you very much for the many years of producing this wonderful magazine. I know it's a lot of work, but I also see that it is a labour of love.

Any chance of keeping subscribers informed of future projects, or new publications via email? I just noticed you have a new book (*Norm Saunders*) and a magazine (*ILLO*) out. I will be subscribing to the mag and buying the book, but it would have been nice to be notified of it beforehand. I guess I just have to keep checking your site.

Also, please let me know when my subscription will expire so that I can renew to your great magazine.

Sincerely,
Josue M.
Vancouver, BC

Dear Josue:

Thank you for your kind words. This magazine is definitely a labor of love, and your comments are the kind that keep me going strong! To answer some of your questions, I have begun doing more mass-emails to everyone on my list, and to keep up with news more often I have started a blog at www.illustrationmagazine.wordpress.com. ILLO magazine has been a slow starter, but I plan on producing #2 very soon. Sorry for the long wait!

Mr. Zimmer,

I love your magazine. I have been collecting since issue number one. The depth and quality of each piece is amazing.

As a child of the '60s, Golden Books were a huge part of my life. I have collected most if not all of the Pocket Guides and many of the Little Golden books that I remember with fondness. I'm sure you receive many requests for articles featuring specific artists, which must get tedious for you, so, sorry in advance!

The "Children's Art" published by Golden in the '40s, '50s and '60s has no real parallel in modern illustration. Two artists in particular stand out for me: Tibor Gergely of Little Golden Books (*A Day at the Zoo*, etc.) and Arthur Singer of Golden Nature Guides (*Zoo Animals*, etc.) Each creates images which transcend the subject matter, creating unique worlds that keep me in a constant state of awe.

Any attention that can be spared for Golden in general and these artists in particular would be greatly appreciated.

Thank You,
Tom R.
Boston, MA

Dear Tom:

Thank you for your suggestions. As you can imagine, there are thousands of illustrators and so little time to get to them all. If there are any readers out there who are experts on the Golden Books, and would like to try their hands at writing a profile on one of these great artists, please get in touch with me!

Dear Dan,

I have been a fan of *Illustration* for a few years, and I recently moved to a new town. Now that I've relocated I'm not sure where to find the magazine. I'm wondering if you could point me in the right direction. Is your magazine distributed in any specific stores or chains in the Hollywood, Florida area?

Sincerely,
Bill K.
Hollywood, FL

Dear Bill:

I'm not sure about specific locations in your area, but Illustration *is distributed nationally by Source Interlink, which services many major bookstore chains. You should try looking at Borders and Barnes and Noble stores, Books-a-Million, Hastings, and other quality newsstands. The magazine is also distributed by Diamond Comics, so you may find the magazine in any of your local comic book shops. And of course you can always order a subscription directly from me! I end up with more of your money in my pocket, and you end up not having to scour the Earth to find the latest issue. Everybody wins!*

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Illustration for a pulp magazine cover. Gouache on board

Gloria Marie Stoll Karn, 1945

Gloria Stoll Karn

by David Saunders

In April, 2008 pulp art historian David Saunders interviewed Gloria Stoll Karn (84), an accomplished artist whose remarkable life was fatefully transformed by a chance encounter at the age of seventeen, leading to seven years of work as a pulp artist. As a young woman who went onto a distinguished career as a fine artist, Gloria Stoll Karn brings a unique perspective and authority to her insightful recollections of the pulp industry during the historic years of the Second World War, as well as her thoughtful reflections on the significance of pulp art within the complex heritage of American painting.

David Saunders: Hello, Gloria! Would you kindly tell the readers of *Illustration* your full name?

Gloria Stoll Karn: Gloria Marie Stoll Karn. When I was born my father said, "Isn't it glorious that everything turned out well! So let's call her Gloria." I was born on November 13th, 1923, and I was an only child. My mother was in her mid-twenties, and we lived in an apartment at 2083 Davidson Avenue in the Bronx.

DS: Just to get the record straight, when you say you were born in "dabronx" is that spelled, "d-a-b-r-o-n-x"? (Laughter)

GSK: That's my New York accent! We moved to a small house in Queens when I was very young. We lived at 4136 Forty-Seventh Street in Sunnyside.

DS: What is your cultural ancestry?

GSK: My mother's parents were both Italian. My father's mother was Swedish and his father was Swiss-German. My grandfather was a stereotypical German, very emphatic about things, and my grandmother was very soft and sweet and wonderful.

DS: Where in Italy was your mother from?

GSK: My mother was born in this country, but her mother was from Abruzzi. I took my mother to Italy in 1972.

DS: Did she like it?

GSK: Oh it was wonderful! It was fun to travel with her. We didn't go on any kind of a tour, I just happened to run into a travel agent who understood that I didn't want to stay in any Holiday Inn. I had done a little research and she just found us wonderful places to stay. We were pretty much on our own.

DS: What were your parent's names?

GSK: My mother was Anne Vera Finamore (1897-1989). And our latest grandson who was born in September, 2007 is named Henry Finamore Karn.

DS: I would have thought "Finnemore" was an Irish name.

GSK: Well, it's pronounced "Fin-Amoré!"

DS: Oh! "*The final love!*" (Laughter)

GSK: Exactly! Or as my mother used to say, "a very *fine* love!"

DS: What was your father's name?

GSK: Charles Theophile Stoll (1893-1938). He grew up in a brownstone in Chelsea, just above Greenwich Village.

DS: Had his parents immigrated to America?

GSK: Yeah. They ran a boarding house and they had people who were coming from the old country and they would house them in the brownstone until they got on their feet.

DS: Chelsea was where all the ships landed in those days. So those streets were filled with dockworkers and laborers. Freight handlers and stevedores loaded everything from ships to warehouses and onto freight trains that used to come right down to the dockside. There were lot of laborers in Chelsea, so having a boarding house over there makes perfect sense.

GSK: David, you ought to go on one of those shows where they ask you all kinds of brainy questions.

DS: (Laughter) I used to play in that area when I was a kid! So what were your parent's jobs?

GSK: My mother was a typist, and my father was a commercial artist. In fact they met when my father was hired to do some work for the furniture business where my mother worked. Dad was a freelance artist with his own company called Stoll & Thayer. They did a lot of advertising and photo retouching.

DS: What years do you think they were in business?

GSK: They started when I was very young, so in the 1920s. In fact my father used to tell the story that he was very youthful looking. He was kind of small in stature and had a boyish look about him. He went to the bank and they thought he was the *office boy!* So he grew a mustache.

DS: Who was Thayer?

GSK: I have no idea.

DS: What was your father like?

GSK: He loved the military, and sometimes I think he brought me up like a *recruit!* There was no "Daddy's little princess." He could be very funny and entertaining. He had musical ability but he couldn't read music. He could sit down and play the piano without any sheet music. He just played by ear.

DS: How did he get involved with an art career?

GSK: I have no idea. It was advertising.

DS: Did his ads ever show up in publications?

GSK: Not that I recall. I was a young child. You know the Great Depression really hit us hard, David. I only remember him getting small jobs off and on.

DS: I can find no record of the company after 1934. Do you think they closed up shop when the Depression was hitting the high water mark around 1933?

GSK: That could very well be, but that's conjecture. I don't really recall.

DS: So there was just the three of you?

GSK: Right. I grew up in a small two-family house and then we moved to 4330 Forty-Sixth Street, also in Sunnyside. The apartment building was called *The Normandy.* We probably moved there in the 1930s, after my father closed the business.

DS: Where do you think you got your talent from?

GSK: My father was the artist, but my mother was really more artistic. Just the way she lived her life, and the way she had the flair to get dressed and flip a little scarf around her neck, and just leave it where it fell. She was an artistic person.

DS: Did she encourage you to follow an artistic life? Did your parents encourage you to go to the High School of Music & Art?

GSK: They did, but a lot of the things that happened to me just kind of happened. I was like a leaf blowing in the wind.

DS: But you didn't just *breeze* into Music & Art! It was quite hard to get into that school.

GSK: Oh yeah, you had to present a portfolio, and you had to be recommended by your school, and then we had to take a test.

DS: I went there too. We had one test where we had to actually draw from a model in front of a teacher in order to prove that we weren't showing them drawings that we had swiped from someone else! It took us three days to take all the tests, but the real problem was that it took months of worrying afterwards to find out if we got in!

GSK: Oh, yeah!

DS: So there must have been some family support for you to take that test.

GSK: Of course, at that time we didn't know about Mayor LaGuardia's High School of Music & Art. I was in the second graduating class. It had just started.

DS: Wow! So it was brand new! Was it actually called LaGuardia in those days?

GSK: No. It was just Music & Art, but that was his baby. Oh my! It was LaGuardia's idea to start the school! He was a creative thinker and doer. During a newspaper strike he famously read the daily comic strips to kids over the radio. Aaron Shikler, the renowned portrait painter who did President Kennedy's official White house portrait was in my class.

DS: Wow! What gave you the idea to be an artist?

GSK: It was partly natural talent and partly just life circumstances that pushed me along in that direction. People talk about goals a lot, but I can't really say that I had any goals in my life, until I decided to get married and have children.

DS: When you were first putting your portfolio together for Music & Art, you would have been around 14...

GSK: Actually I was around 12 because we had these *rapid-advance* classes, but I skipped twice in elementary school and I graduated high school at 16. I had one principal who told my parents he thought it would be better for me socially to not go into those rapid advance classes, because I was so young.

DS: Yeah, that could damage you for life! (Laughter) Why do you think you applied to Music & Art if it was just a newly started school?

GSK: Because the art instructor at my junior high school recommended me.

DS: Was that because they thought you had special artistic talent?

GSK: It must have been. I hope so!

DS: So when you were putting your portfolio together, as a 12 year old girl, I would assume your father would have helped you with it. Do you remember that experience?

GSK: No. He didn't. He taught me to draw a little bit. All I had was what I did in junior high school, and I used to always draw my hands and feet when I was at home.

DS: Did you make samples of lettering or stuff like that?

GSK: Gee, I never did like lettering. (Laughter)

DS: Was your Dad involved with your early art career at all?

GSK: No, he really wasn't. In fact I can remember once, after I had gotten into Music & Art, I was working on some assignment and in order to help, my Dad kind of took over and

CAPT. CHARLES STOLL, ARTIST AND WAR HERO

Won D. S. C. and Croix de Guerre —Dies After Military Ball

Captain Charles T. Stoll of Company C, 107th Regiment, N. Y. N. G. (old Seventh), died early yesterday in the French Hospital, 330 West Thirtieth Street, at the age of 45. He was taken ill on Saturday night while attending the regiment's annual military ball at the armory, Park Avenue and Sixty-sixth Street.

Captain Stoll, who lived at 43-30 Forty-sixth Street, Long Island City, was a commercial artist. He had been a member of the regiment for more than twenty-five years and was the holder of the D. S. C. and Croix de Guerre. He served with the 107th overseas in the World War, re-enlisting after his discharge.

Surviving are his widow, Mrs. Anna V. Stoll; a daughter, Miss Gloria M. Stoll, and a sister, Mrs. Marie L. Smith.

worked on my painting. I just *dreaded* that! I adored him, but I couldn't really say anything to him. When I taught art later on I would *never* touch anybody else's stuff.

DS: Was he a good draftsman?

GSK: He could draw beautifully. I have one of his drawings that he did of the bust of Abraham Lincoln.

DS: When you were a junior in high school your father died. How did it happen?

GSK: He died very suddenly of a cerebral hemorrhage. He was a captain in the 7th Regiment. My parent's social life revolved around the 7th Regiment. They had gone to a military ball and he just collapsed at the table and died.

DS: Was that at the 66th Street Armory?

GSK: Yes. That's the one.

DS: Wow. What an incredible heritage!

GSK: It really is. When he died, he lay in state there, and was attended by two uniformed honor guards in one of the rooms where they had all these cases with antique uniforms.

DS: Oh! I've been there in that room.

GSK: There was another room that my father designed. They called it the Rumpus Room. He also designed one of their ceremonial medals, too.

DS: Do you have one of those medals?

GSK: Yeah. He was a hero in World War One. He received the Distinguished Service Cross and General Pershing signed

his citation. Dad was a corporal in World War One, but he became a Captain in the 7th Regiment afterwards. He was on the frontlines and he spotted a German farmhouse and he went with two companions and captured thirty-six German soldiers and two officers, and they all came out with their hands up. That was how he got the DSC as well as the Croix de Guerre from the French government.

DS: They don't give away too many of those!

GSK: So true.

DS: Do you remember your father pretty well?

GSK: Very Well.

DS: How old were you when he died?

GSK: I was fifteen. He was forty-five.

DS: Was it completely unexpected?

GSK: Well, you know, it was to us, but we remembered a strange incident afterwards. Dad had always wanted to own a top hat, so he bought one. It was brand new and he liked to clown around, so he had this cane with an inscribed silver top, which the 7th Regiment had given to him, and he was clowning around like the bandleader, Ted Lewis. Then he stopped and said, "Well, maybe this will be the first and the last time I wear this." That was the night he died. He might have had a premonition or something.

DS: Your mother must have had a very hard time.

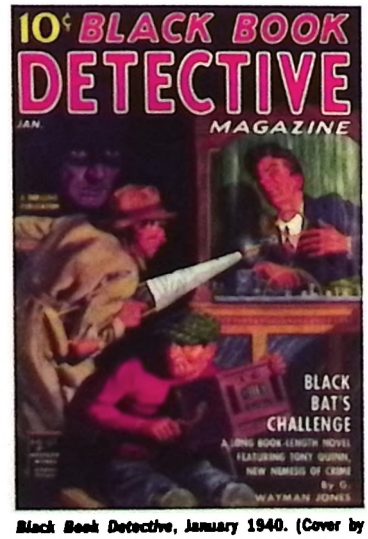
GSK: Well, after my father died she had to get a job. It was tough times in 1938. A couple of days after the funeral, my mother went out looking for a job, and she decided that she wanted to work in the RCA Building at Rockefeller Center. So she went into the building and looked at the index by the elevators, and picked out two companies, Universal Pictures and Monsanto Plastics. She went up to talk to Universal Pictures...

DS: She should have gone into *plastics*!

GSK:...Yeah! (Laughter) Wasn't that a line from *The Graduate*? (Laughter) So anyway, Mom always had a flair for the dramatic so she decided to first go to Universal Pictures. She was right up-front with them. She spoke with the head of the New York office, Mr. Walsh, and said she hadn't worked in nineteen years, but she had been a typist. She said she had a daughter who was still in school and she needed a job. They gave her a test and she was real slow because she hadn't had much practice, but they gave her a chance and she was there until she retired. She became head of the statistical typing department.

DS: When did you graduate?

GSK: I graduated high school in June 1940. I had been in the running for a scholarship to Pratt Institute, but it was awarded to another student because he was a boy and I was a *girl*. I got a scholarship for a little fly-by-night operation called The Display Institute.



***Black Book Detective*, January 1940. (Cover by Rafael DeSoto.) DeSoto's janitor modeled for two characters on this cover.**

DS: Did you learn anything while you were there?

GSK: There was one teacher named Louis Gehring. I really liked him, but I felt the place exploited me. They had me sitting at the reception desk, or they had me mending the torn clothes in the costume department. It seems to me I was getting less instruction than I was just doing free labor. I did learn a little lettering while I was there. One of the owners was a letterer and he taught us that, but it was never something that I enjoyed.

DS: Was it a union shop?

GSK: No. It was a school.

DS: I ask because the display business was carefully controlled by organized labor in New York at that time.

GSK: Yeah, well this was just a school. I stayed there for just a few months and then I left. That's when I got a job at the New York Insurance Company. I was working at the insurance company and after about eight months I was becoming discouraged. Oh! It was *tedious* and *boring*! One night after work, I went home and I was looking back through my portfolio from four years at Music & Art and other miscellaneous stuff. I had this *huge* stack of work and I thought, "Oh! What am I going to do with this!?" I felt that way partly because I was living in a little New York City apartment, and there was no space to keep stuff, but it was also because I had a mother who believed, "if you didn't use it, you didn't keep it!" I guess I didn't really have an ambition for an art career. I was just living day to day. So I tied it all up and I put it in the incinerator room that was in the hallway on our floor.

DS: What floor was that?

GSK: We lived on the second floor. Every floor had it's own incinerator room with a chute that went down to the incinerator in the basement where the janitor worked. Tenants would just leave anything that didn't fit down the chute on the floor of the incinerator room, like a bundle of tied up newspapers, and the janitor would take them off and dispose of them. So I just tied up all of my artwork in a neat pile and put it on the floor along with the newspapers. The next day the janitor knocked on my door and he said, "I found all of your drawings in the incinerator room. There is an artist who lives up on the sixth floor and I showed them all to him. He thinks you have talent, and he would be pleased to meet you." Well, the artist was Ralph DeSoto. This janitor had been posing for Ralph's weird covers, because he had a real craggy face. He was an interesting man. He had been an English teacher at one time.

DS: Could you pick him out if you saw a bunch of DeSoto covers?

GSK: Sure. He was thin and he wasn't real big but he was very strong. He had these deep lines on his cheeks. Anyhow, this janitor said Ralph DeSoto would be pleased to meet me, so boy, I didn't lose any time! I went right up there!

Fred Karn, Gloria Stoll, Mrs. Anne Stoll, Martha Wolfe, Frances, and Ralph DeSoto, 1942

Ralph DeSoto and Mrs. Anne Stoll, 1942

DS: Were you impressed with his work when you first saw it?

GSK: Oh yeah!

DS: What was his world like when you first walked in there? Had you ever seen anything like that before?

GSK: I rang the bell and was greeted at the door by a man in a wide-brimmed black hat and a black mask over his eyes! He really spooked me out. It turned out he was posing for DeSoto. I later learned he was a well-known model who posed for a lot of illustrators. His name was Bill Magner. He must have been posing for one of DeSoto's covers for *The Spider* magazine. Ralph DeSoto greeted me warmly and introduced me to his wife, Frances, and the spooky model. The living room was not unusual. I remember a fake fireplace in a modern design. But walking back into the studio was a high adventure for me. There were two large easels, a drawing table, a huge palette, and all the paraphernalia of a *real* artist's studio! There were things hanging on the walls like knives, handcuffs, gun belts, and sombreros, along with paintings, sketches...all kinds of miscellaneous stuff. I was entranced—sort of a "WOW!" feeling.

DS: How did your mother feel about her seventeen-year-old daughter visiting an artist's studio?

GSK: My mother and I got to know Ralph and Frances. We were all very sociable and we became friends. We even went on a skiing trip all together up to Williams Lake Hotel in Rosendale, New York. There were often parties at the DeSoto's. Frances had the gift of hospitality.

DS: You never can tell who is living in the same apartment building with you!

GSK: I actually met my husband, Fred Karn, at one of Ralph's parties. Can you believe that! He was living in the same building.

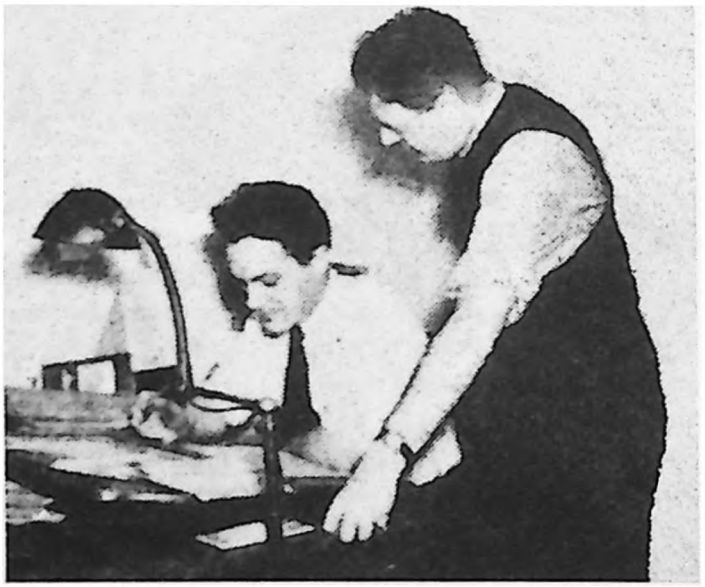
DS: Your husband was living in the same building?!

GSK: Yeah! We were all living in the same building!

DS: Okay. What did Ralph do after your first meeting that day?

GSK: So then, he must have talked to Alex Portegal, the art editor at Popular Publications, because he got me a story to illustrate. I was working for the insurance company from nine-to-five, so I did the assignment in my spare time and I had to deliver it on my lunch break, but I wasn't supposed to leave the building, so I had to run over there on the sly!

Fred Karn and Gloria Stoll, 1942



Alex Portegal supervising an unidentified staff artist

Jane Litell

Gloria's first interior pulp illustration, 1941

DS: So were you nervously waiting to hand over the drawing to Alex Portegal at the reception area of Popular Publications?

GSK: No. It was Jane Littell. When I came in she had her feet up on the desk! She was the editor of some of the romance magazines. So she looked at my drawing and she said, "*Well*, I'll show it to Alex." I didn't know who he was, but after a few moments, she came back and she said, "Well, Alex said we've had worse!"

DS: So that's actually a thumbs up!

GSK: (Laughter) Right! I was thrilled! So I went back to my insurance job and gave them a week's notice that I was quitting my job!

DS: That first published illustration would have been out around Spring of 1941?

GSK: I'm not sure. I still have the printed copies of all my interior illustrations, but I don't have any dates written on them. Anyhow, I was thrilled and I went ahead and quit my job, but then nothing happened. After a few weeks went by I started to really worry, and then finally I got another story assignment and I was off to work as a freelance artist. In fact my first illustration was so pitiful, I have to show that to you, but I improved! Ralph showed me how to do different techniques like how to use dry-brush and how to do line drawings.

DS: Did you use a particular brush or pen or quill for your pen and ink work?

GSK: Well, I mostly used a brush and I guess I used a pen too. I used Higgins black India ink. I always bought a cold press Bainbridge illustration board for my drawings. That's the one that has a little tooth to it. I always bought good sable brushes by Winsor Newton. Of course they weren't as expensive as they are now!

Norman Saunders

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Interior illustration for a romance pulp, early-1940s. (Bill Magner posed for the standing figure)

Interior illustration for a romance pulp, early-1940s

DS: Did you get the habit of using these particular art materials from Ralph?

GSK: Oh, yeah! Definitely! He must have told me what to use when he got me that first illustration assignment.

DS: Did you do any of the lettering on your interior illustrations?

GSK: No. I never did any lettering unless something called for lettering, like the side of an airplane or something like that. Ralph told me about Ben-Day sheet film, which came in different textures and patterns. I extended it over the area where I wanted it, and then I would take a razor blade and cut around the area, and then I would peel the edges off. Ralph taught me stuff like that.

DS: He was a marvelous draftsman. How did you go from drawing to learning how to paint?

GSK: I must have watched Ralph, because he also taught me how to stretch a canvas, for example, and then how to use a pantograph. I did have some painting classes when I was at Music & Art.

DS: Was DeSoto a gentle instructor, or would he grab your pencil and start working on it himself?

GSK: He never touched anything.

DS: Did you ever model for DeSoto?

GSK: No.

DS: Did he have his own professional models? I know he used Frances a lot.

GSK: We used professional models, but sometimes we used friends. There were two modeling agencies. One was called Powers and the other was Connover.

DS: I met a guy who used to pose for DeSoto, and he recalled going over to that building in Sunnyside to pose around that same time. His name is Larry Admire.

GSK: I don't remember him.

DS: What can you tell me about Bill Magner? I heard he posed for DeSoto and Rozen's paintings for The Shadow, and also for Dean Cornwell.

GSK: I remember Bill Magner well. He posed for a few of my interiors. He was tall and thin, with a long face where you could see the bony structure. He seemed to be a loner. He posed for a lot of the slick illustrators like John Gannam, Andrew Loomis, and others. He liked to be around when they were cleaning out their studios, where he could acquire things that he sometimes resold. I recall buying some copper objects from him. He was an incredible model who could hold a difficult pose for a long time.

DS: Did you photograph your models yourself?

GSK: I did a little bit of that, but mostly I used *Fashiongraph.*

DS: What's *Fashiongraph*?

GSK: *Fashiongraph* was a place where they did photographs for artists. Maybe they did fashion photos too, I don't know. It was right across the street from where Popular Publications was. You would hire your models from either the Powers or Connover agency, and they would meet you there. I would have told them what to bring in the way of clothing. Sometimes I would bring some of my own stuff for them to wear. Then I usually tried, as a matter or economics, to photograph for maybe two or three covers at once because those models were charging $20 an hour or something. That sounded like big money then!

DS: One guy told me five or ten bucks an hour was normal during the 1940s.

GSK: Oh, I think it was more like $20.

DS: So the models would show up, and this *Fashiongraph* place would have the lights and camera, and a guy would shoot the set up and then provide you with an eight-by-ten?

GSK: Exactly!

DS: How soon was the turn-around on that? Would they send it over to Popular?

GSK: I would pick it up myself the next day.

DS: So after studying the basics of painting in a high school art class, you learned enough to be a professional illustrator

Gloria Stoll paints a portrait of her father, 1941

just by standing around watching Ralph paint?

GSK: I guess I did. I must be a fast learner! (Laughter) I just had a natural ability.

DS: Did he tell you what to buy or did he give you his extra supplies and materials?

GSK: I watched him set up his palette and I noticed he used Naples Yellow, and I had never heard of that before, but we used that a lot for skin tones. I bought my own art supplies.

DS: Did you mimic his working methods? Did you use all of the same sorts of materials? Did you set up a similar art studio in your mom's apartment?

GSK: Actually, I worked with DeSoto in his studio, because I first did a portrait of my dad, which was a surprise for my mom, so I started out working in Ralph's studio in his apartment upstairs.

DS: Do you still have that painting?

GSK: Yes. It's hanging in our living room. A real family heirloom!

DS: It seems pretty remarkable that you were a successful illustrator in a field where you were one of the only women in the world of pulps—and a teenager!

GSK: Well, there you go.

DS: So the covers in those days paid around a hundred bucks, and the interior illustrations paid around $8 or $12?

GSK: I started out getting $7.50 for a single and $15 for a double page.

DS: How long did it take you before you were able to get a cover assignment?

GSK: 1942 was my first cover.

DS: Once that started, was it a flood of monthly work?

GSK: I was doing illustrations and covers at the same time. After a while I was doing *Rangeland Romances* pretty regularly, and some of the *Love* pulps.

DS: For how long were you going upstairs in your apartment building to work in Ralph's studio? For a month, or two months?

GSK: Um. Several months. After that we shared a studio. Ralph and I had a studio that was just off of Central Park West. We split the rent.

DS: What was the address?

GSK: It was 28 West 65th Street. Ralph had an eagle eye! And he noticed that this building had a skylight, and it was a different kind of a skylight, it wasn't up in the ceiling, it was like one whole wall was a glass skylight set at an angle.

DS: So did you have to walk up like five or six flights to get there?

GSK: Yeah!

DS: You know, right there, within a few blocks were a lot of other illustrious illustrators.

GSK: I never knew that!

DS: You were within a few blocks of Norm Saunders, George Gross, Alex Redmond, John Gnagy, Allen Anderson, Richard Lillis, and Gilbert Bundy. They all lived in that area.

GSK: One time I did a painting and I submitted it to the *Saturday Evening Post*. Talk about goals! I thought it would be nice to make it in the slicks. They returned it very nicely, with not one word!

DS: Not even a word?!

GSK: No! (Laughter) So anyway, that was it.

DS: So you never went to any other artists' studios when you worked over on the Upper West Side?

GSK: No.

DS: You never socialized with them for dinner or lunch? What would you do for lunch?

GSK: That's a good question. Maybe I didn't eat. I was a hungry artist! (Laughter) Maybe I carried my lunch in a brown bag. I don't remember.

DS: At that point, when you were sharing a studio with Ralph, was he still in the same spirit that he had always been in?

GSK: Yeah. I never remember him not being in a good mood. Always cheerful.

DS: Nothing could stop him. Where was the art supply store that you went to?

GSK: It was Soltzman's Art Supply. That was the same place where I got the frame for my father's portrait. It was an antique frame, and I fell in love with it, but I knew it was too big, and I remember the guy said, "Oh that's no problem, we'll just cut it down!" I also used Glasman's, Art Brown, and Empire Art Supply.

DS: Glasman's closed down. Arthur Brown is still in Midtown, but they only sell pens now. Empire still sells art supplies up on Lexington. Where was Soltzman? Was it on the Upper West Side?

GSK: I don't think it was too far from Popular Publications.

DS: Popular was at 205 East 42nd Street.

GSK: Yeah. I think Soltzman's was somewhere around Grand Central maybe?

DS: Oh yeah! There was a huge art supply store near there. Did they give you advice on what to buy or did Ralph suggest what you should buy?

GSK: Well I just bought the same stuff, over and over.

DS: In those years the pecking order of the professional illustrators was all upset by the mobilization for WW2.

GSK: Yeah!

DS: During the war we had the *All-American Girls Baseball League*, and *Rosie the Riveter* filling-in for the men overseas.

GSK: They were ahead of their time! I already had as much work as I could comfortably do.

DS: Did the editors always accept anything that you came up with?

GSK: I never had anything rejected.

DS: Did you give them preliminaries?

GSK: Yeah. You had to present preliminaries, because the artist had to come up with the ideas. The covers had nothing to do with the inside stories, *unless* sometimes they would assign someone to write a story about one of our covers. Most of the time it was the artist who had to come up with the cover idea.

DS: I have seen a photograph of Miss Litell with a model in the offices at Popular showing an artist what she wants...

GSK: Maybe that was staged.

DS: Yeah. It looks completely staged, but did the editors come up with their own suggestions about the best way to compose a cover?

GSK: Editors had specific ideas for the *inside* illustrations, but the artists had to invent their own cover ideas. Sometimes I would chat with Harry Widmer and we would sit around and talk about cover ideas. We would brainstorm, and the next thing you'd know, I was leaving his office with a new cover idea.

DS: Were you sketching stuff as you were chatting?

Preliminary sketch for *Rangeland Romances*, mid-1940s

GSK: No. We were just talking.

DS: He was working for *Rangeland Romance*.

GSK: Yeah. So then you always had to present two or three sketches at a time to Harry Steeger, and he would generally approve one of them. So I would save the others and then a couple of months later, maybe make a few changes, and then submit them again. They would be accepted the second time around. I have some of those sketches too.

DS: Was there ever a time when Steeger became less interested in personally approving every cover?

Jane Litell directs two models as Alex Redmond (seated) sketches the scene, early-1940s

Harry Steeger, early-1940s

Preliminary sketch for *Rangeland Romances*, mid-1940s

GSK: I never even saw him most of the time. I would just bring the sketches and give them to Alex who would take them into his office and that was it. I think Alex Portegal made the final decisions on the covers. Steeger just okayed the sketches. When I would bring in the finished painting, sometimes it was still *wet*! I had those special clamps where you hold two paintings together to protect the wet surface. I used a lot of Japan Drier, too. I'm surprised the paintings have survived so well. Alex would decide if anything needed any changes, but I don't remember making too many revisions.

DS: I am curious about this because Harry Steeger of Popular Publications once said in an interview that nothing was ever printed without his approval.

GSK: Oh?

DS: He said he would always personally approve every single cover that was printed. I wondered if you could confirm that?

GSK: All I can say is that as far as I knew, he would look at the *sketches*, but as far as the *covers* were concerned, I don't remember Alex ever saying that he was going to take it in and show it to Steeger. He probably trusted Alex on those.

DS: One way we could tell is if Alex came back to you a lot and said, "No. No. Steeger wants something to be changed."

GSK: No. That didn't happen.

DS: So if that didn't happened after you did so many cover paintings, then it would seem that Alex probably had the independent authority to approve covers.

GSK: Yes. I think so.

DS: Where did you pick up the habit of using *Japan Drier?*

GSK: Well, I must have learned that from Ralph DeSoto. He also taught me how to use a pantograph, for example, to enlarge the sketches, and he told me to start making what he called a "morgue."

DS: That's a photo reference library.

GSK: Right. Yeah. So I would tear pictures out of magazines and categorize everything.

DS: I have always wondered about the amount of fluidity in DeSoto's paint. Your paint was not as liquid as his.

GSK: Oh. That's interesting.

DS: Did he suggest that you mix the oil with a certain amount of turpentine first to get a specially fluid consistency for the paint and to save it and pour it out into little cups?

GSK: I used the cups attached to the palette.

DS: So you just had the regular two cups? One with painting medium and one with regular turpentine for cleaning and thinning?

GSK: Right. Exactly.

DS: So you didn't mix your own consistency of medium first?

GSK: I must have thinned the linseed oil first and then added a little Japan Drier. In later years I used a medium of one-third turpentine, one-third linseed oil, and one-third damar varnish.

DS: Did you ever pre-mix big containers of red or yellow or black paint to cover large areas?

GSK: No. I just mixed it on the palette as I needed it.

DS: So other than Music & Art, did you ever have any other formal art training?

GSK: All I had was after I started doing the pulps and started to make some money. That's when I went to the Art Student's League. I studied etching and lithography with Harry Sternberg, and I studied anatomy with Robert Beverly Hale, and then I would listen to some of the other instructors.

DS: Were the classes expensive?

GSK: It was only fifteen dollars a month at that time.

DS: Did you ever use a Lucigraph?

GSK: Nope. I just used a primitive sort of Pantograph that we used to transfer an enlarged version of a sketch onto the canvas.

DS: What about an opaque projector?

GSK: No. I never used one of those either.

DS: Did you use your morgue photographs a lot?

GSK: Occasionally.

DS: Did you feel any "shame" for basing your paintings on photographs instead of live models?

GSK: No. I didn't know any different.

DS: There was a funny story about Rockwell, who had done all of his superb work from careful study of photos of models that he had posed, and that Leyendecker had come over to visit his studio one time and saw some photos lying around on a table and he turned his back on them really quickly as

Preliminary sketch for *All-Story*, mid-1940s

Preliminary sketch for *Adventure*, mid-1940s

Preliminary sketch for a romance pulp cover, mid-1940s

Preliminary sketch for *All-Story*, mid-1940s

Work from Harvey Dunn's painting class, 1943. Oil on canvas

Work from Harvey Dunn's painting class, 1943. Oil on canvas

though he had accidentally stumbled across some embarrassing indiscretion!

GSK: (Laughter)

DS: ...and to be polite, Leyendecker never again turned his eye towards that area of the studio again. Rockwell told that story to my father after Leyendecker's funeral service.

GSK: That is funny. But he was up front with it though, right?

DS: Yeah. Rockwell was up front about it. But I guess there was a stigma about basing paintings on photographs. I think if you're very young, you get out of school, you're lucky to be working as an artist, you've got Ralph DeSoto as a teacher... it's a whole new generation. You're not worried about the ancient traditions of using live models...

GSK: Yeah, right. But then I also took a class with Harvey Dunn.

DS: Did you actually study with Harvey Dunn, or were just sitting in on one of his demonstration seminars at the Society of Illustrators?

GSK: It was a class and I was there for several sessions. I can't remember where it was, but it wasn't at the Society of Illustrators or the Art Student's League. It was someplace else. I have four paintings that I did there with him.

DS: Was that around 1943?

GSK: It was around then.

DS: I think he stopped teaching regularly at The Grand Central School around 1942. After that I have only heard about him giving short seminar classes. Do you remember anything about him?

GSK: He would stand over me when I would work, and he really got us to see skin tones and the nuances of luminous shadows on faces. He made us really *look*! We had live models. I remember there was one kid in the class who was ambidextrous. He painted with a brush in each hand, and he could write a sentence at the same time with two pens, which would be a precise mirror image: one side reflecting the other.

DS: You said you didn't pal around with other artists, and yet you were often in a classroom full of young professional artists.

GSK: Yeah, but I didn't know any of them.

DS: Were they all professional illustrators?

GSK: No. It was a mixed bag as I recall.

DS: At one point it was very difficult to get into Harvey Dunn's class.

GSK: Is that right? I don't know how I managed, but I got in.

DS: I know DeSoto never studied with him.

GSK: Yeah. He didn't help me to get in. Somebody must have told me about Dunn. I remember he taught us about really looking at faces and seeing the nuances of colors, and seeing

Work from Harvey Dunn's painting class, 1943. Oil on canvas

Rangeland Romances, January 1943

New Love Magazine, February 1943

Love Novels, May 1943

Love Short Stories, December 1943

the blues and greens in skin tones.

DS: Did he help you to become a better painter?

GSK: Well, the commercial stuff was so different. I think every little thing adds something.

DS: Harvey Dunn was a Humanist in some ways. He was actually a Christian Scientist.

GSK: Oh really. I didn't know that.

DS: Was he able to inspire you about the noble tradition of painting?

GSK: Some of that must have come through. I don't know that I ever verbalized that until I just heard you say it, but I was certainly aware that it was a different experience than doing pulp covers.

DS: You mean working with him and talking with him about art was a different experience than doing pulp covers.

GSK: I mean to learn to paint that way, to really *look* and *see!* I mean, when you're doing pulp covers, you draw a pretty face and it's a sort of a standard face, and you can change the color of the eyes and the hair, but it's still just what used to be called a Hollywood conception of beauty and handsomeness.

DS: Well, are you proud of your work that you did in those days? Do you regard it in its context with pride?

GSK: You know, that's an interesting question. When I look at it I sort of surprise myself. I'm surprised at how many of them there are, and I think that if I had to do one now, I don't even think I could do it!

DS: As far as authors who were writing the stories you were illustrating for the interior drawings, did you ever get along with any of those authors?

GSK: I never met any of the authors.

DS: Did you have the idea that they were great authors?

GSK: No I didn't. It took me until later in life to realize that some important authors got their start in the pulps, like Ray Bradbury and Raymond Chandler. It was probably bread and butter for them.

DS: You haven't named any other artists that you crossed paths with.

GSK: I just remember delivering paintings and nine-times-out-of-ten no one else happened to be there. I remember meeting Chiriacka. I liked his painting style, which was freer than mine.

DS: Did you ever call him "Darcy"?

GSK: No. We just called him "Acka!" I also remember meeting Nick Eggenhoffer. I was so impressed with him as a person—a very distinguished gentleman. And then there was a pen & ink artist named Clinton Spooner, who did interiors for *Love Book*. I did quite a bit of work with Peggy Graves and Bruce Cassiday. I was friendly with Dorothy Les Tina, she was an editor who also wrote.

DS: What was she like?

GSK: She would be getting on in years if she is still around. Her name would be Dorothy Johnson. She joined the WACs (Women's Army Corps) in 1943 and served as a Public

Illustration for *All Story Love*, October 1945. Watercolor on board

Information Officer in Europe. While she was there, she married the science fiction writer Frederik Pohl, but she was later married to Lt. Col. Raymond E. Johnson. For a while they lived in Alaska, and she had a published novel called *Icicles on the Roof.* We continued to exchange Christmas cards, but we finally lost touch. I don't know if she wrote for the pulps at all, but she was an editor of Popular's romance pulps. And then there was Olga Quadland. She was also in the WACS during the war. I went skiing with her and a friend of hers, named Jane Lancaster, up to Mt. Tremblant in Canada. Jane was telling me about her brother and how handsome he was, and then I thought, "Yeah, sure!" Well, it turned out she was Burt Lancaster's sister!

DS: The handsomest man on earth!

GSK: Yeah! (Laughter) Jane was a really nice person.

DS: Do you think you would have had a shot at Burt if you had played your cards right?

GSK: (Laughter) I never got to meet him, but I met his wife! One time I was walking along Fifth Avenue and I saw Jane Lancaster who was walking along with her sister-in-law.

DS: Getting back to your paintings, did you always use oil paint?

GSK: No. Well, 99% of the time I used oil paint and the paintings were about 18" by 24", and every time I got one to take home I took a razor blade and I slashed along the edges of the stretchers, so I could re-use the same stretcher bars, and I threw the paintings in a pile. I never even thought to take good care of them or anything. It's amazing how bright they look.

DS: Did you learn that trick from DeSoto? I don't think he did that, did he?

GSK: No. I probably figured that out myself, because I economized by using the stretcher over again.

DS: Did he keep his paintings around? Did you see him keeping racks of well stored paintings?

GSK: I don't recall seeing him keeping his paintings around.

DS: I just wondered where you got the idea to slice the canvas off of the stretcher bars.

GSK: Well, it was mostly because I wanted to re-use the stretchers. They would all have to be relined today if you wanted to display those paintings now.

DS: Did you prime your canvas in those days?

GSK: No. I bought pre-primed cotton canvas.

DS: Did you ever stain the canvas before you painted it, so you would have a colored ground to work on?

GSK: No. I just always worked on a white ground. I used pencil to draw my subject and then I would spray it with a fixative so the graphite wouldn't come through the paint.

DS: What sort of spray did you use?

GSK: It was an atomizer that you spray with the mouth. It made me dizzy when I used it.

DS: That was probably a charcoal fixative made from thinned-down lacquer.

GSK: Yeah. Oh. You asked about oil paints. I did a few covers in watercolor, and I did a couple in an opaque gouache.

DS: So those few are on illustration board then, right?

Illustration for *All-Story Love*, January 1945. Watercolor on board

Illustration for *All-Story Love*, December 1945. Watercolor on board

Dime Mystery Magazine, September 1943

Dime Mystery Magazine, July 1943

GSK: Yeah.

DS: When did you start doing covers for the detective pulps like *Black Mask* and *Dime Mystery*?

GSK: About 1943.

DS: Where did you get all of those ideas for those macabre pulps?

GSK: Well, that's a good question! I just think that I must have been living vicariously through these pulp magazines. I did all of these romantic ones, and then I did these detective and mystery ones. How did I come up with these *weird* things? I think everybody has a shadow side, and maybe there was just something in me. I had another mentor, named Ed Whitney, who was a very famous watercolor artist and teacher. I had met him at that class at the Society of Illustrators. Ed was quite a philosopher and he read a lot. I recall one time I asked him, "How does a novelist know what is inside of a criminal's mind?" and Ed Whitney said, "Well, there's some of that in all of us!"

DS: Yeah. We're all fascinated by the macabre. We are all drawn to gruesome things, so it just seems to be something of common interest to all people, like highway traffic slowing down to rubber-neck at a car wreck.

GSK: Well that could be, because I would come up with these weird ideas and I would think, my gosh, where did that come from?

Alden Norton, 1940s

DS: Did you talk to Ralph about it?

GSK: It must have come up in conversation.

DS: I ask because this stuff was really his territory, basically.

GSK: Oh, yeah. It was. But I just latched onto it.

DS: Did you feel like you were competing with him at that point? As though your career had grown up to the point where you were a challenge to your mentor?

GSK: Oh no! No! I never felt that! There was enough work for everybody. I never had that feeling. I just had a feeling of gratitude.

DS: Were you working with different editors when you branched out into this new genre?

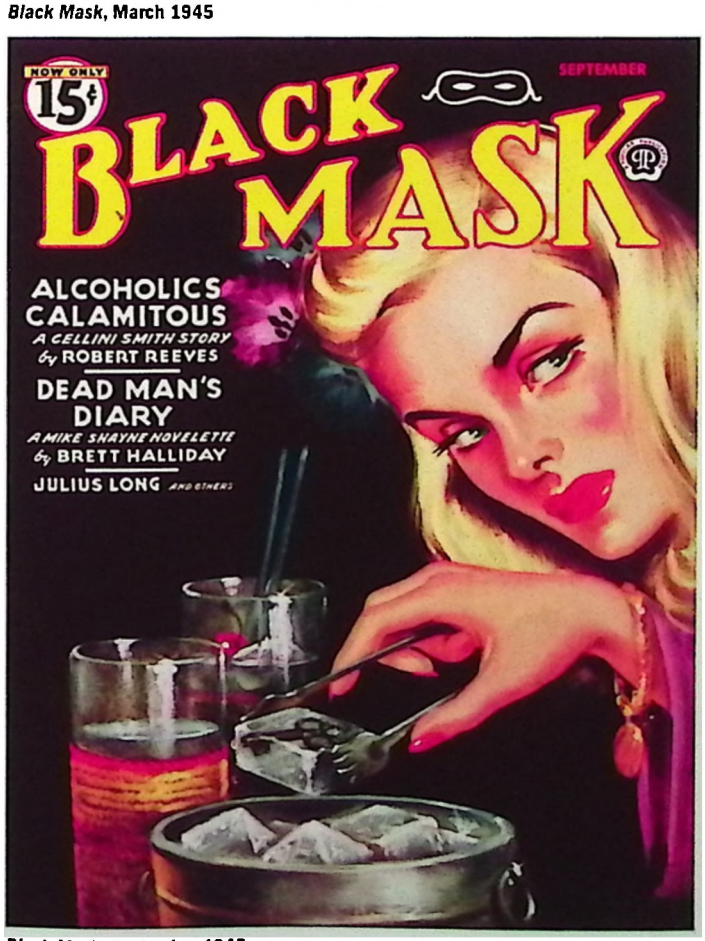
GSK: I worked for Al Norton on the detectives. I also did a few interior illustrations for *Argosy*, but I never did a cover. I did a few mystery covers for other publishers as well, like Thrilling Publications, but I did 99% of my work for Popular.

DS: Did you sneak away from Popular on the sly at Ralph's suggestion? I ask because he worked for Thrilling on the sly. Popular and most publishers didn't want to promote an artist and then have that artist go somewhere else and allow another company to profit from their "investment," so it was frowned upon.

GSK: Gosh. I probably didn't know any better.

Black Mask, March 1945

Black Mask, May 1945



Black Mask, September 1945

Black Mask, February 1946

Dime Mystery Magazine, November 1943

Dime Mystery Magazine, January 1944

Dime Mystery Magazine, May 1944

Dime Mystery Magazine, July 1944

Illustration for *Dime Mystery Magazine*, July 1945. Oil on canvas

Dime Mystery Magazine, September 1944

Dime Mystery Magazine, January 1945

Dime Mystery Magazine, March 1945

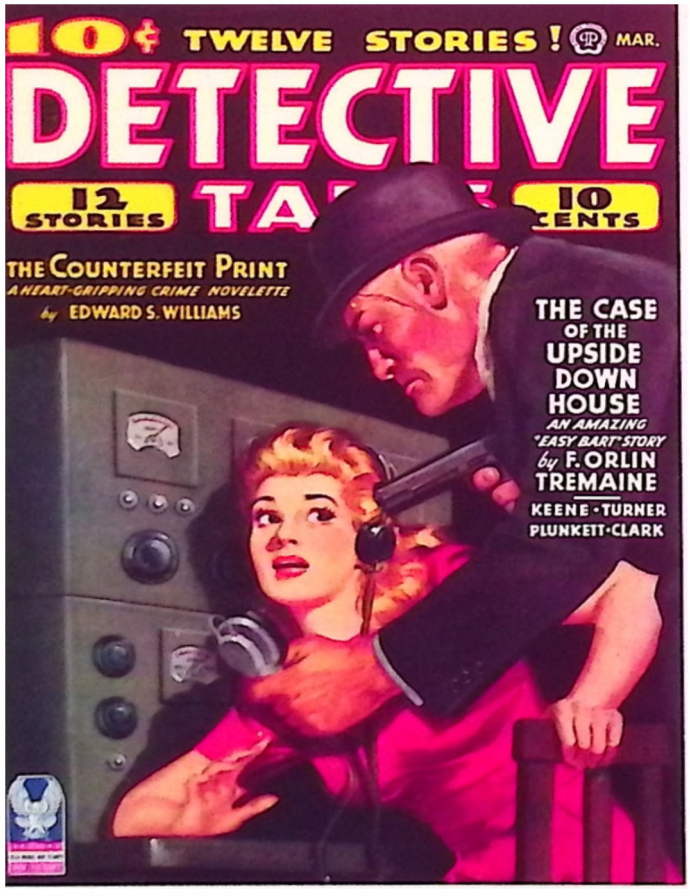
Dime Mystery Magazine, May 1945

Dime Mystery Magazine, June 1946

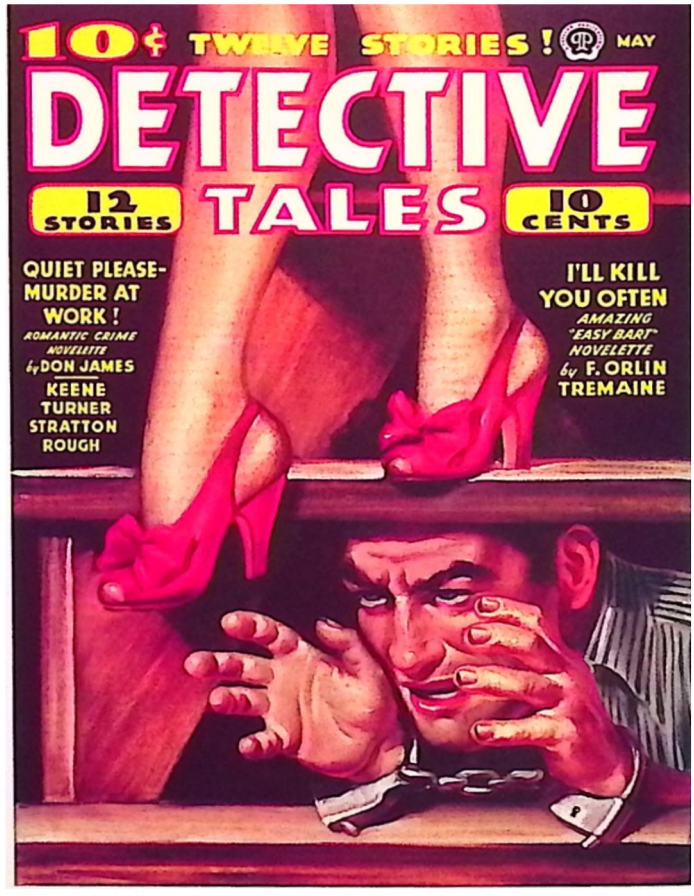
Dime Mystery Magazine, September 1946

Dime Mystery Magazine, November 1946

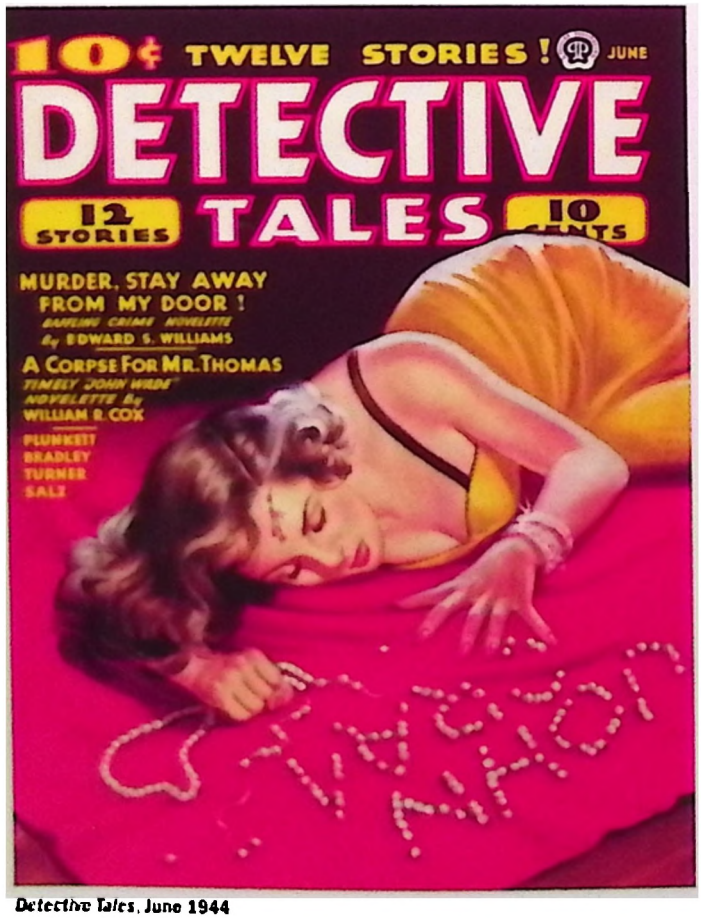
Detective Tales, December 1943



Detective Tales, March 1944



Detective Tales, May 1944



Detective Tales, June 1944

Detective Tales, January 1945

Illustration for *Detective Tales*, July 1945. Oil on canvas

All-Story Love, June 1944

All-Story Love, July 1944

DS: Some people said an artist could make more money doing ten interiors than one cover, because it was so much faster and easier to do pen & inks?

GSK: That may be.

DS: Was it more time-consuming to get a cover approved and revised? Were there many corrections involved with your cover assignments?

GSK: No. Not a lot. I had a cowboy and a girl who were holding a daisy doing "He loves me, he loves me not," and they were near some birch trees, and Alex Portegal laughed because he didn't think they grew birch trees out West. So I came home and painted out the birch trees and painted in some western mountains. (Laughter)

DS: So most of the time you didn't have to do any revisions?

GSK: Not too many. One time one of the editors asked me, "Couldn't you just turn the head a tiny little bit?" (Laughter) He had no idea I would have to repaint the whole head!

DS: How long did you share that studio with Ralph? Was that for just a few years?

GSK: Yeah, not too long.

DS: I think Ralph and Frances permanently moved to Patchogue, Long Island, around 1944, because he told me that Frances bought the house as a summer place without him knowing it around 1943, and they permanently moved out there a year later.

GSK: I know that he was thrilled with the house!

DS: So you probably had to get your own studio after Ralph moved out of town. Did you keep in touch with Ralph and Frances after they moved to Patchogue?

GSK: Yes. My mother and I visited them a few times.

DS: Did you go to Frances' funeral service in 1945?

GSK: No, regretfully. I didn't learn of Frances' death until later.

DS: Did you meet DeSoto's second wife or their kids?

GSK: I met Audrey after he married her. We had a party in Rego Park and Ralph brought Audrey over, but that was the only time I met her. I never met their sons.

DS: Were you unhappy about leaving that nice art studio off Central Park West?

GSK: Yeah, that was nice, but I didn't care where I worked. I was on my own two feet and I knew what I was doing, so I set up a studio in my own apartment.

DS: Where was that?

GSK: That was in Rego Park, Queens. It was 6282…are you ready for this?…*Saunders Street*!

DS: Alright!!

GSK: (Laughter)

DS: At that point, how did you get into the city from Queens?

GSK: On the Eighth Avenue subway.

DS: The old *I-N-D!*

All-Story Love, August 1944

All-Story Love, November 1944

All-Story Love, December 1944

All-Story Love, January 1945

Illustration for *All Story Love*, July 1947. Oil on canvas

Illustration for *All-Story Love*, June 1948. Oil on canvas

Illustration for *All-Story Love*, March 1948. Oil on canvas

Illustration for *All-Story Love*, November 1948. Oil on canvas

GSK: Yeah. *The Independent*!

DS: Were you still living with your mom?

GSK: I was still living with my mom. My studio was actually right in my bedroom. I just made a screen and put up some of my sketches that I did at the Society of Illustrators. I used to go to a life class there with a group of artists. I screened off a part of my bedroom and I built a couple of shelves where I put all of my turpentine and oil and brushes and then I worked there.

DS: Did your mom want you to start your own professional art studio in an independent apartment?

GSK: Well, I did that eventually, but at that point I converted part of my bedroom at home into a studio and worked there for a few years before launching out on my own.

DS: Can you explain the process by which you received a proof sheet?

GSK: I would bring a painting in and Alex Portegal would have one or two of these proof sheets of something I had done previously. He would save them for me.

DS: So it was an act of courtesy on Alex's part to give them to you?

GSK: Yeah. I was happy to have a record of all I had done.

DS: So there wasn't a box and he said, "You can go through these and find your covers if you want them."

GSK: No.

DS: So typically you would show up with a finished paintings and two or three preliminary sketches, and Alex would give you a check and he would hand you a couple of proof sheets.

GSK: Usually just one proof sheet. Maybe I did get a few duplicates occasionally. I don't remember if he handed me the check or mailed it to me.

DS: So Alex would take your new preliminaries and he would take them and look them over and show them to Harry, and then say, "Oh, by the way, here are some proof sheets from the last two paintings that we printed."

GSK: Right. There was never any ceremony.

DS: Were there any markings on the proof sheets?

GSK: Oh yeah! Some of them have markings where Alex gave directions to the printer. And somehow he got them back, and you can see the markings on them. Sometimes they actually had his markings on them where he wanted the printers to make some color corrections.

DS: So there was a colorist involved whom he was talking to and saying, "Punch up her cheeks and make 'em pinker!"

GSK: Yeah. Right. Exactly!

DS: Did you ever meet the colorist?

GSK: No.

DS: So when Alex was done working on the proofs he just thought to give them to the artists? Was he thinking you were going to assemble a portfolio?

GSK: I don't know what he was thinking. He just gave them to me. I thought it was interesting to have them. I was glad to have them. By the way, I was also given copies of my black and white interiors too! They look just like they look in the

Romance Western, October 1948

Romance Western, December 1948

Proof sheet with art director's markings, *Romance Western*, August 1948

get mans hair darker

smooth out flesh tones in mans face

15¢

THE BEST IN WESTERN LOVE STORIES

Romance WESTERN

AUG.

a little more blush in girls cheeks

WHEN A GIRL Loves

by ISABEL STEWART WAY

MARIAN O'HEARN
ART LAWSON
OTHERS

AUG. 1948 Romance WESTERN 15¢

Printed in Canada

yellow shirt brighter

magazine. They are printed on pulp paper.

DS: Would Alex tear them out and give them to you?

GSK: No nothing was torn out. They were just loose pages.

DS: So nothing is printed on the backs?

GSK: Right. They were actual proofs on pulp paper.

DS: So you only wound up with proofs of your own interiors or covers?

GSK: That's right! I never got anybody else's.

DS: All the other artists I have known from Popular—DeSoto, Chiriacka, and my father—they all had a collection of proof sheets of their work for Popular. So it seems that each artist from Popular accumulated a collection of their own proof sheets, which eventually became a definitive inventory of their unsigned works. Each of these collections is actually a very important source of authentication for accurate attributions of often-unsigned pulp cover paintings, it is important to keep those collections intact. Although they have value to collectors as vintage novelties, they have a much greater historical value as a source for authoritative artist attributions. Someday, future art historians will be better able to make informed attributions if those collections are kept together.

GSK: That happened to me. There was an art museum out in Scottsdale, Arizona and they were attributing a painting to me. I had a phone call from a woman at the museum and she told me that of all the paintings in the show, this one of mine was her *favorite* So I was feeling pretty good about that! (Laughter) She sent me a photo of it, and I took one look at it and I could see it wasn't one of mine. It had a real *loose* style of painting, so I think it might be a Chiriacka!

The "newsstand" in the offices of Popular Publications, Spring 1940

DS: Did Alex Portegal offer you copies of the magazines themselves for free?

GSK: No. I never got a copy of the magazine.

DS: Did you ever buy the actual pulp magazines just to have them or read them?

GSK: No. Not at that time, but in 2001 I was able to buy a few of the magazines when I was the Guest of Honor at an annual conference of pulp collectors in Ohio called Pulpcon.

DS: It's funny that you never bought any pulp magazines. There were big stacks of magazines at Popular's offices where you entered, right?

GSK: No. Never saw them. No.

DS: But Steeger said there was a kind of fake newsstand set up at the entranceway to Popular offices where visitors could look at an array of the current magazines by Popular and other pulp publishers. Steeger set that up so he could see how the whole field looked that week.

GSK:I have no recollection of that.

DS: I sent you a photograph of that entranceway with some other stuff. Was that on another floor or something?

GSK: I never knew there was another floor.

DS: I don't know either. I just wonder how to reconcile that photo of the newsstand with your recollection of there being no newsstand.

GSK: I only remember one floor, and I never saw a fake newsstand. Maybe I just walked right by it and never noticed!

DS: Maybe Hal stopped doing that after 1940. Why is he sometimes called "Hal" and sometimes "Harry" Steeger?

GSK: I only knew him as Harry, but Hal is another nickname for Harry, you know like "Prince Hal."

DS: "Prince Hal!" Wow, is that pompous or what?

GSK: (Laughter) Yeah. I always called him Mr. Steeger, but he was kind of adolescent. He was always pulling a lot of juvenile pranks on everybody in the office. One time he hid my handbag when I was talking to Alex. When I got up to leave and I couldn't find it I went into a panic! Steeger said, "Are you sure you brought one?" Then he gave it back, and he thought that was *so funny!*

DS: You must have been a cute little kid, because in a way you were in over your head and you didn't even know it.

GSK: Exactly! Yeah!

DS: You were doing fun stuff, and there were thousands of people in America that would have given their right arm...

GSK: I *know!*

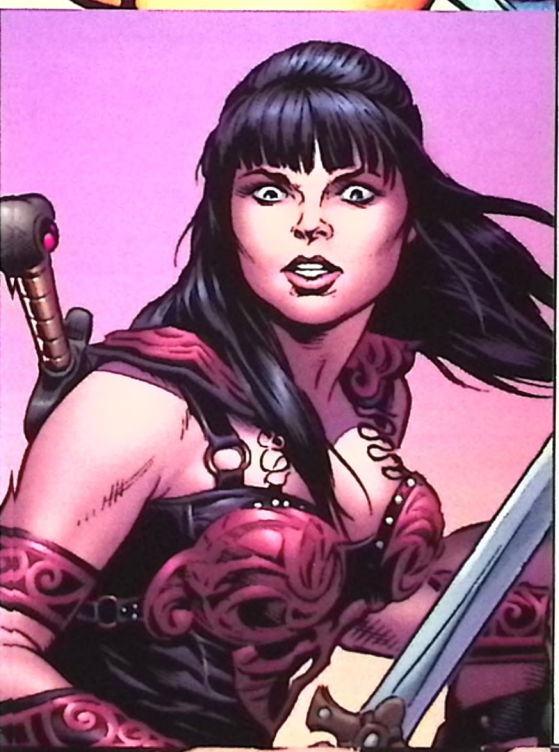
DS: ...to be in New York, illustrating, and getting well paid, and here you were doing it right out of high school!

GSK: Exactly. Exactly.

DS: And you did a fine job.

GSK: Well, Thank you.

DS: They were also lucky to get a kid who was willing to work that hard! It was a great deal for Popular because they could train you and get you to create the kinds of covers they



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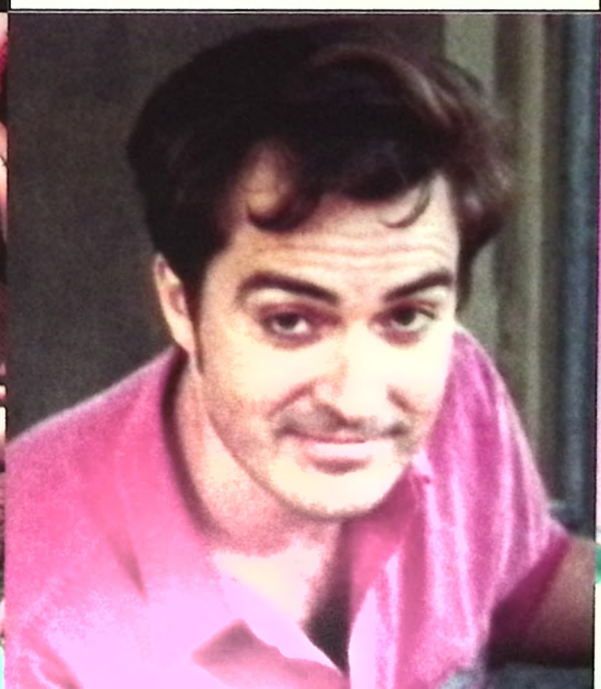


Preliminary sketch for *New Love*, September 1949. Pencil on paper

New Love, September 1949

needed, for entry-level prices.

GSK: I know! I don't take it for granted.

DS: Did you ever get an agent?

GSK: No. Well, once there was an agent named Morehead, and he would take some of my pulps and re-sell the rights to them to some Canadian company. But that was very short lived. I think it was a newspaper? I still have one copy.

DS: What was Morehead's first name?

GSK: I don't remember.

DS: Was he married?

GSK: No. He had a *mother!* He and his mother had this art agency. It must have been called *The Morehead Agency*, but I'm not sure.

DS: (Laughter)

GSK: David, did your father remember me?

DS: My father died twenty years ago, and I have only recently heard about you, so I never had a chance to talk with him about you. I never even heard your name until DeSoto mentioned you. I don't believe your work is credited very often.

GSK: No. I hardly ever signed anything, and I rarely got printed credit on the inside contents page. In recent years I signed all of the original magazine covers that I still have.

DS: It was a surprise to me to learn your name. I did know there were some women who worked in the pulps before your time. Margaret Brundage, who worked for *Popular Fiction Publishing* in Chicago in the 1930s, and Martha Traver, who worked at Popular Publications for *Love Book* magazine. But at the same time that you were a protégé of DeSoto there was one other woman pulp artist, whose work was very much from *The School of DeSoto*, named Irene Endris.

GSK: *Irene?!*

DS: Yeah. Can you tell me about her?

GSK: Why do you want to know about Irene?

DS: Well, I am just curious about Irene Endris.

GSK: I can't tell you much about her. I just remember she used to come over and visit once in a while.

DS: Did she visit you or did she visit Ralph?

GSK: No. She was Ralph's friend.

DS: Was she his girlfriend?

GSK: Oh, no! No! I never imagined such a thing!

DS: What kind of friend?

GSK: She was just some friend. I remember her talking about her boyfriend, but I never met him. Ralph seemed to know a lot of people. I didn't know she was an *artist*, but you just said she was an artist! I didn't know of any other women artists who were working in the pulps while I was there.

DS: Irene Endris is given printed credit on around a dozen pulps that I know of.

GSK: Huh! That's hard to imagine.

DS: She is listed as having worked for Columbia, Donnenfeld,

Illustration for *New Love*, September 1949. Oil on canvas

and Ace, and her covers appeared at the same time that you were working—and yet as far as you know, you were the only woman artist working in the pulps at that time and place.

GSK: I think I would have known if Irene was an artist.

DS: Can you add any further recollections or clarifications about the actual woman you knew whose name was Irene Endris?

GSK: Not really.

DS: Well, even if you can add nothing further, it is still a significant revelation that at the time you were sharing a studio with your mentor, Ralph DeSoto, you fully believed yourself to be the only woman working as a cover artist in the pulps. That means Ralph never dissuaded you from this belief, despite the fact that his social friend named Irene Endris occasionally visited your shared studio. Your were surprised just now to hear me characterize her as an artist because you believe you would have known if she was an artist. The fact that you have that belief suggests that Ralph never introduced Irene to you as an artist, even though he was an exceptionally courteous and talkative person. Ralph would have certainly pointed out the exceptional coincidences that you were both the only two women working as pulp artists at that time, and that you both worked for the same publisher, Ned Pines, where you occasionally sold pulp covers. The most obvious reasons why Ralph would not mention these facts about Irene is either because he was unaware of them, or he knew they were not true. It is hard to imagine that Ralph would have been unaware of the true identity of Irene Endris, considering the facts that the "Endris" paintings are all embarrassingly cursory versions of DeSoto's own style, and that in each case they are published by companies that DeSoto worked for, and always for companies other than Popular Publications. For all of these reasons, Ralph would have been extremely curious to ask Irene about her working as a pulp artist. Since there was no evidence of such curiosity in his introduction of Irene to you on several occasions, it seems clear that Ralph was actually well aware of the true identity of the artist credited as "Irene Endris" and he knew that she was not a pulp cover artist. Until further proof surfaces, your circumstantial evidence suggests that "Irene Endris" was most likely a convenient alias that DeSoto secretly used when he chose to produce lower-quality work for lower-paying publishers that were rivals to his major "exclusive" employer, Popular Publications.

GSK: Wow! You *are* a detective!

DS: (Laughter) I've been piecing this puzzle together for a few years. I only recently realized that you were in a perfect position to shed some light on the true identity of "Irene Endris." The case isn't closed, but the evidence now squarely points to DeSoto.

GSK: I think I would have known if Irene was an artist.

DS: How did you meet your husband, Fred Karn? You mentioned that he lived in your building.

GSK: I met him at a party at Ralph and Frances' house, but my mother had already met him.

DS: Your mother first met him at the DeSoto party?

GSK: No. She had met him in the building. She said that she had seen a young man who always holds the door and always tips his hat, and he's such a nice man and so good looking. So lo and behold, my mom and I are invited to this party up at DeSoto's apartment, and my mother says, "That's the one I was telling you about!" So that's how I met him.

DS: Well, I don't want to pry into your personal affairs, but...

GSK: ...You're doing a pretty good job! (Laughter)

DS: So when did you move out of your mom's apartment in Rego Park and get your own place?

GSK: It must have been around 1946. Eventually it was time to leave the nest. I moved to Brooklyn Heights. A lot of the artists were moving out of the Village at that time and moving to the Heights. I lived at 152 Willow Street. It was a brownstone. I lived on the second floor, and I used one whole room as an art studio.

DS: So you lived there by yourself. Did you go back on weekends to see your mom?

GSK: I saw my mom often.

DS: Did you continue taking art classes to improve your skills?

GSK: I had been going to the Society of Illustrators where they had a sketch night with a model.

DS: Did you rub elbows with some interesting people there?

GSK: Yes! That's where I met Ed Whitney, and he suggested going up to study with Eliot O'Hara. For a couple of weeks for two summers I went to a watercolor school at Goose Rocks Beach in Maine taught by Eliot O'Hara. That was near Kennebunkport.

DS: Were your class members art students, or illustrators, or professional artists?

GSK: All kinds. I met one friend from Eliot O'Hara's watercolor school in the summer dd of 1946, She was living in Florida and the following year she invited me to come down for *The Clothes Line Art Show* in Palm Beach. I packed up a lot of my figure study work that I had done at the Society of Illustrators and I shipped it all down there ahead of time. All the artists would come down early to set up their work in the best spots. I got there late so the only place left to hang up my work was all over this gorgeous banyan tree. You could not have had a better setting to show your work than on this tree. Everyone was setting up their outdoor easels so I set up too and started doing these really quick watercolor sketches of everything around me. At one point these three black

Eliot O'Hara with students, 1946. Gloria Stoll is kneeling in the center, chin in hand

Rangeland Romances, March 1945

Rangeland Romances, May 1945

Rangeland Romances, April 1946

Preliminary sketch for *Rangeland Romances*, April 1946. Pencil on paper

LUSCIOUS REBEL OF INDIAN VALLEY
RANGELAND ROMANCES
15¢
TOO MANY DREAMS
KISS AND RUN

street performers came along. One played a washboard, one played a washtub bass and the third one did a tap dance on a plywood board. He had on a bright green tailcoat and a purple high hat, and I did some really quick watercolor sketches of these guys and the crowd gathered around and some man asked me, "Have you ever done any circus pictures?" My main talent in life was not to let an opportunity go by, so I said, "No, but I *can*!" He represented a display company that was one of the largest in America, and he said, "What I have in mind is for you to do some circus pictures for me with the same kind of freedom that you did these black musicians."

DS: In 1947 you still had a busy career going on in NYC!

GSK: Yeah. Right.

DS: Where would you get the time to do that?

GSK: That was the nice thing about freelancing, David. You could pretty much work at your own pace. I went to the Art Student's League. I could visit my friends. So what happened was, he said to me, "When I stay in New York, I stay at the Waldorf." So that was it. When I got back home I saw an ad in the newspaper that the circus was coming to town. So I remembered this guy, whose name was W. L. Stensgaard. I called the Waldorf and asked if they had a "Stensgaard" registered there, and she said, "No, but he's due tomorrow." I cannot believe I did this, but I agreed to meet this man in his hotel room!

DS: (Laughter)

GSK: He was a perfect gentleman. What he wanted was some loose sketches of clowns and circus things. He wanted to make big animated window displays, so I had to figure out how to get into the circus at Madison Square Garden, which wasn't easy. They had a guard at the gate. So I went around the back of the building and I saw this loading dock where the elephants came in. I was up against the wall and beside me all the *elephants* were coming through! So I snuck in that way, and I was talking to the famous clown Emmett Kelly and everyone. One guy was walking on his hands and carrying on a conversation with me at the same time. I came back later with my portfolio under my arm and I just walked through like I worked there. The third time I got a press pass from a friend. Mr. Stensgaard liked the circus sketches and he gave me a couple of freelance assignments to design displays. After that he offered me a steady job in his company. He had offices in New York, Chicago, and California. I could have had my choice of locations! But I chose to get married instead!

DS: Did you work for the paperback books at all in the late 1940s?

GSK: No. Not at all. But I did do illustrations for a sixth grade English primer book. I had to draw a picture of a kneeling llama, and I didn't have a clue what a llama looked like, so I went to the New York Library picture morgue and I didn't find anything so I went to the Museum of Natural History, and they kept me waiting forever and then finally someone came down with a big smile on her face and a picture in her hand and said, "Is this what you want?" and it was the Dalai Lama! (Laughter) I finally just found a picture of a regular llama and I invented how it might look when it was kneeling.

DS: Did you do all the illustrations in that book.

GSK: I did probably half of them, but I lost my only copy.

DS: We have got to find that book again. What's the title? How would you recognize it?

GSK: Listen, you're not going to spend hours trying to find that book are you?

DS: Well, we've gotta find it!

GSK: You're really a *detective*!

DS: Did you get fan letters for your pulp work?

GSK: No. Someone complained once because I didn't have the right number of knots in a noose, and once I drew a train that wasn't quite right. (Laughter)

DS: There's always ten people who are eager to write a correction for the one person who thinks to write something nice. So you were not treated like a celebrity?

GSK: No. I never felt like a celebrity! (Laughter)

DS: When did you start teaching?

GSK: I first taught a watercolor class in New York at St. Bartholomew Church on Park Avenue around 1948. That was the same year Fred and I got engaged. I was married in November on my birthday in 1948, and we moved right to Pittsburgh after our honeymoon in Colorado.

DS: So you're married and you move to Pittsburgh and you think you will just keep working at Popular and mail the work back and forth.

GSK: Exactly. Yeah. I did a couple more covers, but it was too unwieldy. I just gave up painting pulp covers.

DS: How did Fred feel about that?

GSK: He was okay.

DS: I mean, he was the only guy on the block that was married to an artist who painted pulp covers. Wasn't he kind of thrilled that you had that special talent...

GSK: (Laughter)

DS: What was the problem with working for Popular after you had moved to Pittsburgh?

GSK: It was just too much trouble with the crating and the shipping.

DS: So those last few covers that you shipped from Pittsburgh would be your swan songs?

GSK: Right. They were probably *Rangeland Romances*. I really enjoyed working with Harry Widmer. He was such a neat guy.

DS: So why wouldn't you stay in touch with them after you left the business?

***Improving Your Language* by Paul McKee and Annie McCowen, Houghton Mifflin, 1948**

◄ Illustration for *Rangeland Romances*, July 1947. Oil on canvas

GSK: I seldom got socially involved with the people from Popular Publications.

DS: Was that because you were a young woman?

GSK: There could have been some of those feelings. I probably only saw Steeger a handful of times, so it never would have occurred to me to send him a Christmas card! I just thought of it as strictly business.

DS: So, when it was over, it was over. Like you don't go back and socialize with your coworkers from the life insurance company?

GSK: (Laughter)

DS: So in January 1949, you return from your honeymoon and you move to Pittsburgh...what did you do to earn money?

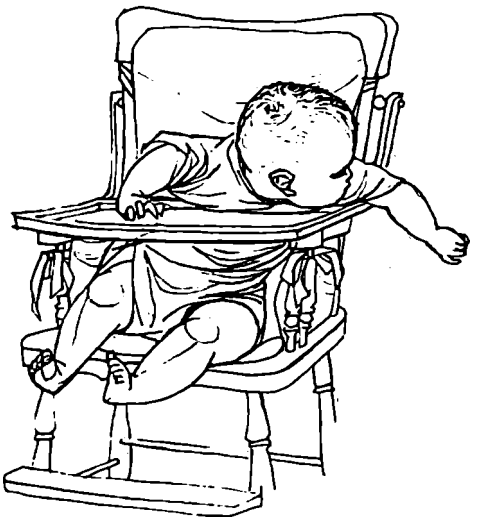
GSK: I didn't earn any money. My husband did all that!

DS: (Laughter) That's a wonderful thing!

GSK: You bet!

DS: Did you miss the whole rigmarole of working?

GSK: I had learned to do etchings at the Art Student's League, and a print of mine had been in the Brooklyn Museum's National Print Show and received a Purchase Award in March 1949, and then Yale University also bought a copy of that same print. It was called *The News Man*. I did it in New York before I went to Pittsburgh.



A drawing of Baby Vera, 1952

Well, I decided I wanted to do more etching, so Fred had come from Pittsburgh and had graduated from Carnegie Tech, which is now called Carnegie Mellon, so we went up to the art department to see what was going on with etching. They had this beautiful etching press that hadn't been used in years and the students were using it to knead their clay! It was a mess. The head of the art department agreed to let me use the press if I would clean it up, so Fred and I went in to clean it up and I soon began working on my etchings. I did local subjects like our R.F.D. mailman, and a neighbor girl with her cows.

DS: What was your goal with making prints? It would have been unlikely that you imagined you could sell them, so why switch from illustration to etchings?

GSK: I wanted something different than doing pulps. I didn't have a goal of making sales. I never did have that kind of goal.

DS: There was still no significant market for American artists at that time anyway, other than commercial illustration. So were you doing prints just to keep active?

GSK: That's right. Yeah.

DS: Did you and Ralph DeSoto keep in touch?

GSK: No. We didn't. When I moved to Pittsburgh we just lost touch with each other except for Christmas cards.

DS: Many of the retired pulp artists began to make paintings that were influenced by Frederic Remington and Charles Russell. Did you ever try that?

GSK: No. I just stopped doing Westerns when I stopped doing the pulps. I studied one night a week with Samuel Rosenberg at the Isaac Seder Educational Center at the YM&WHA in Pittsburgh. He was a wonderful teacher. That's where I started to do abstract painting.

DS: What did you do next?

GSK: I was raising the kids and I was also very productive in my art studio. Fred was building the house, so I didn't have to worry about housekeeping too much. I had lots of time to paint. I made lots of pencil sketches of my three children, Vera, Shari, and Keith.

Our daughter Vera was born in 1951. Our second daughter Shari was born in 1953, and our son Keith was born in 1958. All of my kids have an artistic flair. They now work in dance, theater, costume design, and furniture design.

DS: What does Fred do?

GSK: He is a retired chemist, having worked for the Bureau of Mines in coal-to-oil research. We still go to Chemistry Society meetings. He has a big vegetable garden, which makes for a contest between him and the deer and groundhogs.

DS: After you left the New York publishing world in 1949 and began making art for yourself, did you feel that your creativity had been stifled by the pulps?

GSK: No. I jumped right into taking art classes with Samuel Rosenberg. He was a senior art professor at Carnegie Mellon, and he also had an evening art class that he ran privately. Some of the best painters in Pittsburgh were in that class. I had a friend and I used to pick her up and we'd drive to the class. For some reason there were more women than men in the art class.

DS: That's often the case. I think that goes back to the old traditional belief that an upper class daughter is required to attend finishing school where she will learn to play the piano, to paint, and to speak French.

GSK: (Laughter) Yeah. That's probably where it comes from. You know what impressed me? Fred and I went to New York a few months ago and we visited the Art Student's League, and I had such a feeling of nostalgia!

DS: It hasn't changed that much, right?

GSK: Right! I thought I was going to feel so strange, but I felt like I had never left! It was just such a wonderful feeling. I was so impressed to see people of all ages in the studios...

DS: Yeah, but the building inside looked just the same?

GSK: Oh my gosh! Just as grubby as ever!

DS: Yeah. I went there when I was in high school, and I went

Illustration for *Romance Western*, June 1948

back years later and it looked exactly the same. I've seen photos of it from the forties and it looks exactly the same then! But I haven't been there in twenty years, so I wasn't sure if it was still the same.

GSK: Yeah! They have a gallery now. They have a lot of *off-the-charts* stuff in the gallery, but that was a good experience.

DS: Did you teach in Pittsburgh?

GSK: I have taught abstract painting and collage at the North Hills Art Center, the Sweetwater Art Center, and the Community College of Allegheny County.

DS: In what way were you qualified to teach abstract art after eight years of doing pulp art covers?

GSK: (Laughter) Rosenberg was a strong influence on my life and my artwork. Abstract art was becoming popular then. Sam taught some interesting pupils like Andy Warhol and Philip Pearlstein. I can't believe how many wonderful people God has put into my life...well, like you, David.

DS: I feel the same way about meeting you! My father was fascinated with non-objective abstraction. He continuously experimented with it in his spare time from 1946 onward, for the rest of his life. He once told that he was amazed by the fact that he was just as satisfied with certain abstract compositions, which he had spontaneously created, as with anything else he ever made. He felt it was a private kind of satisfaction that he would never expect anyone else to understand. By 1958 DeSoto was doing abstract paintings, and by 1959 he was teaching abstract painting at C. W. Post College on Long Island.

GSK: I didn't know that.

DS: By that time Ralph needed the income, so when they asked him to teach a drawing class he agreed to do that too, but he could draw so well that they asked him to stay on and just do that. He also had private art classes for the rest of his life where he taught both abstract and academic art.

GSK: Yeah. The pulps were such good training for me. At one point I was doing a series of biblical subjects that are a crossover of abstract and figurative. One was entitled *Jacob's Ladder*. Jacob is lying on a rock and looking up at a ladder that is going all the way up to the top of the painting and you can still see the pencil lines where I was going to put the rungs, but it was dark on both sides where I was going to put these floating angel forms, and I thought, "Oh gosh! Angels don't need rungs!" so the figure is somewhat representational although I didn't use a model but I attribute that ability to imagine a figure to the work I did on the pulps, because I had done so many figures in action. The "ladder" became a ladder of light.

DS: Do you think you were imagining or actually *envisioning* Jacob, as in a vision?

GSK: Yeah. It was a vision, but the angelic forms are very amorphous. They are not realistic at all.

DS: Have you received recognition for your art career?

GSK: My work is in the collections of Yale University, Westinghouse, The Speed Museum in Louisville, and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. I had a one-person show at the Carnegie Museum in 1966, where I showed all abstract paintings. It was exciting. I also got a Purchase Award from the Carnegie Museum

***Jacob's Ladder*, 1975. Oil on canvas**

***Newsman*, 1948**

Illustration for *Rangeland Romances*, April 1948. Oil on canvas

Illustration for a pulp cover, 1940s . Oil on canvas

Illustration for *New Love*, January 1948. Oil on canvas

for my entry in their *Artists of Pittsburgh* show in 1960.

DS: Did you get interested in Pop Art, or feel any connection between Pop Art and Pulp Art?

GSK: There probably was a connection, but I never gave it any thought.

DS: Andy Warhol came from Pittsburgh. Did you ever meet him, or cross paths?

GSK: One time I went to an underground film in Pittsburgh and I think it was by Andy Warhol. It was called *The Haircut.* It was somebody getting a haircut, and it went on for about an hour. Oh! I felt, "What's going on here!" (Laughter) We have the Andy Warhol Museum now in Pittsburgh. Some of his early illustration drawings are beautiful and sensitive!

DS: Did you stay in touch with any of your former co-workers from the pulps into the 1950s, and 60s, and 70s?

GSK: We used to go to New York a couple times every year after Vera was born, and I called Ed Whitney and he said, "I can't see you, I have to go the doctor's office about a skin condition on my face. I look awful. You don't want to see me!"

DS: You didn't stay in touch with anyone else from Popular?

GSK: Only Dorothy Les Tina. There were also two other people I was friendly with—Ollie Redpath, who got married and became Ollie Hager, and Olga Quadland, who worked for Al Norton.

DS: Why didn't you stay in touch with all of those people from Popular?

GSK: Well, I moved to Pittsburgh and that was it.

DS: Was your work for Popular just impersonal business transactions?

GSK: No. I had good relationships with everybody there.

DS: I saw Ernest Chiriacka a few weeks ago and we talked about you. He remembers you.

GSK: Oh really!

DS: Yeah. He is ninety-five.

GSK: Oh, my! He was always so *elegant* and aristocratic!

DS: It must have been a very different experience for you when you left commercial art and became more interested in etchings, and watercolor and abstract art. Were you relating to art in a different way at that point?

GSK: Oh, absolutely! Yeah.

DS: What would you say was the difference between the way you related to art when you worked as an illustrator and as an abstract artist?

GSK: Oh, that's a good question, because they were so different!

DS: You have been an abstract artist ever since 1950, so what is your relationship with abstract art all about?

GSK: That's a tough question! (Laughter) I like to think it reflects my life experience. As I grow and hopefully develop as a person, I think that affects my art.

DS: Is it an intimate experiential relationship of self expression? So your soul is on the line?

GSK: That's very well put, David.

DS: How would you contrast that to your relationship with painting when you were a young artist working at Popular?

GSK: Those paintings were almost like a formula. You had a certain idea of beauty, based on the Hollywood standard, and it was more of a *craft*. Even though I was trying to render all of these pulp paintings as well as I could, it was still more about learning the *craft* of commercial art. Whereas what I do now, I think I work more from past experiences but also from the *unconscious. I allow things to happen!*

DS: The word "craft" is a little inadequate for making a distinction, because of course you use craft in your current paintings when you are working from your unconscious. So, can you elaborate on what you mean by the word "craft"?

GSK: Maybe *technique* would be a better word. When you do pulps you can't be all that experimental. You've got to conform to what is expected. Even though each pulp artist develops his or her own style—hopefully you can recognize one of mine from a DeSoto—but you are still working within more boundaries in commercial art. You develop a certain technique for how you paint hair, for instance.

DS: Was it fun for you?

GSK: Oh yeah! I really enjoyed doing it! I felt so grateful because I might have ended up working at Macy's or something, or staying at that life insurance company! (Laughter) I was really so happy to be doing stuff that I liked to do.

DS: Did you work on an easel or a drawing table?

GSK: I worked on an easel for my paintings and a drawing table for my sketching and the interiors. I also did those few watercolor and gouache covers on the drawing table. But most of my covers were done standing up at an easel. I still stand up when I work at the easel.

DS: My Dad always said, "You never can do anything worth anything sitting down!"

GSK: I know they always show pictures of Rockwell sitting down at the easel, but even to this day I can never sit down to paint.

DS: Do you use a maul stick?

GSK: I did when I used to do covers. Oh yeah! Not any more, though.

DS: Did you keep all of your pulp paintings in the closet? Did you show them to your art teachers or your kids?

GSK: They are all kept in a box in a closet. I had one *Rangeland Romance* cover with a cowboy that was carrying his bride over the threshold, and there was a little sampler on the wall of the log cabin that says, "Home Sweet Home," so when my son Keith got married I hired a conservator to reline it and I got a beautiful frame for it.

DS: Did you ever show them?

GSK: I had a show at the North Hills Art Center in 1983. It was fun! People came to the opening in 1940s clothing and WWII uniforms! We had a big band playing swing music. We raffled off one of my printer's proofs. For that show I tacked all of the original pulp paintings onto the wall with little brass brads on blue-gray mat boards.

DS: From the time that you retired from Popular until the time that you had that show, were these pulp paintings a part of your kid's daily home life environment? Did they grow up around paintings that Mommy made for the pulps?

GSK: They knew what I did. I didn't have them hanging on the walls, but I had the printer's proofs available in albums, so the kids saw them, but we never paid too much attention to them.

DS: You were busy making new paintings that were more meaningful to you. Is that right?

GSK: Yeah. That's true. The pulp paintings were just considered something that Mom did. That's how I made my money. I could have been making it at the insurance company! (Laughter)

DS: What were the benefits to you of working in the pulp industry?

GSK: It was an apprenticeship for learning how to draw action figures. I was learning as I was going and earning enough to support myself.

DS: The challenge of learning to draw is different from learning to paint.

GSK: Right! Exactly! Yeah.

DS: So you were learning your "craft" or "technique" when you did the pulp paintings, but you were learning how to "let things to happen" when you made abstract paintings. Did you feel that you would not be rewarded if you put too much spontaneous creativity into the pulp paintings? Would it have been inappropriate for you to have worked on them for a longer time, or put more effort into them?

GSK: Oh no, I didn't mean that.

DS: I was wondering because you said that you had a more *intimate* relationship with your abstract paintings, because you could work without preconceiving the outcome.

GSK: That's right.

DS: So would that same kind of concentrated intimacy have been inappropriate for a pulp? What is the difference between your emotional relationship to a pulp when you were doing them, or to an abstract painting that you do now?

GSK: I'll have to think to answer that. (Laughter) I thought of it as a *job*—a way to make a living. I might have been emotionally living vicariously through the romance and the shadowy mystery stuff for the pulps.

DS: Maybe you were more emotionally involved with the *fantasy* in your subject matter than in the act of your painting the pulp art. Each one of your romance covers has a different clever concept, so were you engaged with the fantasy, or did you feel that you were just doing a boring repetitive task?

GSK: No. It was never boring. Each painting was a challenge. I had to dream them up. Sometimes the cover was a starting point for a story and they would get a writer to write a story around it.

DS: Is it difficult to remember how you related to painting at that early stage of your career? Has your later relationship with painting grown so much more meaningful that it is hard

Original illustration, 1940s. Watercolor on board

Original illustration, 1940s. Gouache on board

Original Illustration, 1940s. Gouache on board

Original Illustration, 1940s. Gouache on board

to remember that initial relationship?

GSK: You're asking profound questions here! (Laughter)

DS: Most discussions about what makes something "high art" or "low art" are only based on ideas, but your actual experiences in life bring a unique authority to your opinions on this question. Here you are now a painter who paints paintings, and there you were then a painter who painted paintings, but in retrospect you consider one to be a meaningful expression and the other to be just "technique." Why were your pulp paintings just "technique"?

GSK: For one thing, color played a big part. You had to use color so that you could out-scream all of the other covers on the newsstand. Somehow they wanted yours to stand out. So you used pretty raw colors! Primary colors! Fire engine red! Bright yellow! Bright blue!

DS: If you did something that wasn't bright enough would they ask you to brighten it up a little more?

GSK: Sometimes they would, but I understood what was needed.

DS: Maybe DeSoto told you that rule?

GSK: I understood it was needed by looking at other pulp covers. You knew what you had to do to out-shout all of the other covers on the magazine rack. One thing that Alex Portegal would complain about my covers is that I didn't leave him enough room for all of his titles.

DS: Oh! That's true! Your covers are quite busy and tightly framed. I never noticed it, but that's true.

GSK: Yeah. He would say, "Leave me more *plain space* so I can get more titles in!"

DS: Exciting compositions and brilliant colors are basic elements in the formalism of an artist like Mondrian. His masterpiece *Broadway Boogie Woogie* of 1942-43 is an abstract composition of brilliant blue and red and yellow rectangles, which were designed to reflect the same primary colors of the American popular culture that you were "shouting out" from newsstands on Broadway & Times Square at that same time. What is the difference between Mondrian's formalist experiments and your own pulp paintings? In many ways, your pulp paintings were formalist compositions of basic design elements arranged with bright colors, so why doesn't a pulp painting function as abstract art? (Laughter)

GSK: With abstraction you are reducing everything to a shape, color, texture, line, value, all of those things that go into making a painting. You're not necessarily telling a literal story. You're inviting the viewer to bring his own experience into the painting and allowing things to happen.

DS: Why are the paintings you have done since you left the pulps more personally satisfying? Is it just a cultural stigma against "low art," or is your pulp painting actually of less personal significance?

GSK: Well. I have to ponder that.

DS: Is it just that you are getting paid cash for one and not the other?

GSK: With the pulps, you're doing the same thing over and over and over. Maybe in one instance the girl is on the swing and the next minute she's standing against a fence, or whatever the situation might be, but it's still just boy meets girl and you're using blatant color and you're idealizing their faces. They're not real. When you walk in a crowd you see all these different faces, fat ones and thin ones and people with beards and people with no hair, and people with bleached hair and

Gloria Stoll Karn Pulp Checklist

142 pulp magazines covers by Gloria Stoll Karn — December 1942 to June 1954

All-Story Love

1944-06
1944-07
1944-08
1944-11
1944-12
1945-01
1945-02
1945-03
1945-04
1945-05 (signed "Gloria")
1945-06
1945-07
1945-08
1945-10
1945-11
1945-12
1946-05
1946-06
1946-07
1946-11
1947-01
1947-03
1947-07
1947-09
1947-11
1947-12
1948-01
1948-03
1948-04
1948-06
1948-07
1948-09

Black Mask

1945-03
1945-05
1945-09
1946-01
1946-02

Detective Tales

1943-12
1944-03
1944-05
1944-06
1945-01
1945-07

Dime Mystery

1943-07
1943-09
1943-11
1944-01
1944-05
1944-07
1944-09
1945-01
1945-03
1945-05
1945-07
1946-06
1946-09
1946-11

Love Book

1947-01

Love Novels

1943-05
1944-12
1946-03

Love Short Stories

1943-12

New Detective

1944-03
1944-05
1944-09

New Love

1943-02
1948-01
1948-02
1949-09

Rangeland Romances

1942-12
1943-01
1943-02
1943-03
1943-04
1943-05
1943-10
1943-11
1944-01
1944-02
1944-03
1944-04
1944-05
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1948-02
1948-04
1948-05
1948-06
1948-07
1948-08
1948-10
1949-02
1949-04
1949-06
1954-07

Rangeland Love Stories

1952-08
1953-02

Romance

1943-03
1948-04

Romance Western

1948-06
1948-08
1948-10
1948-12

Thrilling Love

1944-07 (signed "GS")

Thrilling Love, July 1944

New Detective, September 1944

Love Novels, March 1946

Romance, April 1948

***The Fire Within*, 2008. Acrylic on canvas**

old people and people that are stooped over and it relates more to life! But when you're doing a pulp cover, you're idealizing something that is not really real life. It's just a fantasy.

DS: Yeah. Maybe the most important difference for you was that you put all of your pulp paintings into a box and just put them away!

GSK: For years they were just in a pile on the floor! They weren't even in a neat pile. Now they're in a box somewhere.

DS: So that's a difference, because your other paintings made you proud and you hung them up and it makes you happy to look at them!

GSK: Yeah, but on the other hand I did frame that one pulp for my son and his wife and they are happy to have it displayed in their home, and they also have a couple of my watercolors that they love too.

DS: So one important difference between your pulps and your abstracts is that you were telling a story in the pulps, but you are "*not-knowing-what-you're-doing*" when you create abstract art. Maybe, in a spiritual sense, that quality makes your abstract creativity as profound as prayer.

GSK: Oh, yes.

DS: So that when you are painting nowadays you are engaging a larger part of your awareness. You're trying to be aware of something that is going on and you're not sure how it's going to turn out because it reflects reality and not just fantasy.

GSK: Exactly.

DS: But when you were doing the pulps…

GSK: …you knew just what you wanted the end product to look like!

DS: Right.

GSK: You knew that from the very beginning.

DS: Maybe that's the difference. What do you think?

GSK: Yeah. I think that sums it up pretty well.

DS: It seems important for an artist to find a balance between technique and spontaneity. Maybe we all make "low art" when we are afraid to surrender control over the outcome to spontaneity? Maybe we *should* have a distinction between "high art" and "low art", but the term "low art" should refer to any work that is made with complete control over the outcome?

GSK: There was one pulp painting I did that was going to come out around Thanksgiving time, and the guy was wearing a coon skin cap and he had shot this turkey that was on his back and he had his arm around the girl and they were walking along in the middle of a snow storm. That was the only time that I painted the background with a palette knife and I

can remember that *juicy* feeling of that *thick* paint! That just popped into my head as an instance where I *didn't* know how it would turn out! That's the kind of creative thing that happens more frequently when you're doing so called "high art."

DS: But in that instance you were able to transcend the mediocrity of the assignment.

GSK: Yes!

DS: Did they pay you extra when you did that? (Laughter)

GSK: (Laughter) Never thought of that! I could have said, "I used a lot more paint on this one!" (Laughter)

DS: Was it sometimes possible to put more into a pulp painting, and at those times were you working in a way that was closer to doing "high art?"

GSK: That didn't happen very often. Mostly I used to love to paint hands. I also loved to paint hair.

DS: You hair is much better than DeSoto's.

GSK: Thank you! (Laughter) When my grandchildren came along they renewed my interest in representational art in order to capture them. That led to a period of doing portraits. I was responsible for hiring models every week at a local art center, and occasionally someone would buy one of my portraits hot off the drawing board! I am currently experimenting with acrylics to create paintings that are a blend of abstract and narrative.

DS: Your latest paintings are really beautiful!

—© 2008 David Saunders

Gloria Marie Stoll Karn, 2008

For more information about Gloria Stoll Karn, please visit her at: www.GloriaStollKarn.com

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Saunders is a noted pulp historian and long-time contributor to this magazine. His new book on his father, *Norman Saunders*, has just been released by The Illustrated Press.

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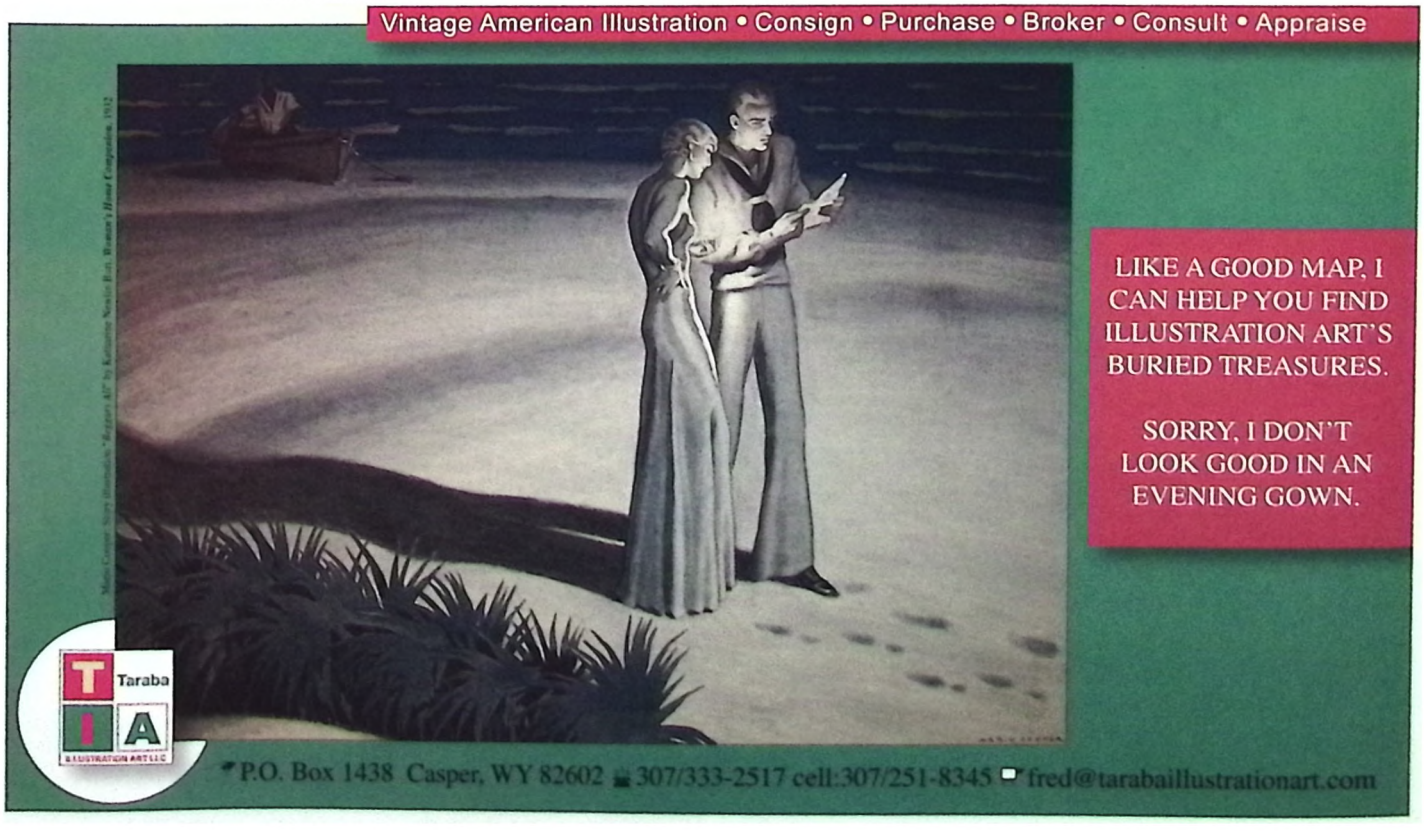


Sanford Kossin in his one-room studio, New York City, 1952

Kossin on Kossin

by Sanford Kossin

Introductions by Nick Meglin *and* Murray Tinkelman
Special thanks to Barry Klugerman

SANDY KOSSIN: AN APPRECIATION by Nick Meglin

Line, whatever the media used to produce it, remains the foundation of the artist's expression. It is also the most difficult of all graphic approaches in that the artist presents his work in its most vulnerable state. There's no rendering camouflage, flamboyant color, or tricky technique to direct the eye away from the artistic strength—or weakness—of the work.

Fortunately for Sandy Kossin, he has never had to concern himself with sleight-of-hand to suppress drawing inadequacy. It was apparent from early on that his eye-to-hand-to-paper response could swiftly and faithfully capture whatever subject appeared before him, and Kossin has enjoyed this facility throughout his long, successful career as a leading illustrator.

Serving as structure for the various components of form, composition, and design, as well as contributory to the graphic statement in its final stage, Kossin believes his bold, linear commitment best serves his personal approach to telling the story in the context it is meant to be seen—the reproduction itself.

For the artist, media preference is derived through experience, and is mostly a question of creative comfort and aesthetic choice. In the case of work produced for publication, media is most often chosen based on how that final graphic statement is best served. In the process of mind-to-surface delivery, media is nothing more than a means to an end. While Kossin is at ease in all media, it was always his penwork that has impressed me the most. With pen, Kossin can at once offer elegance and boldness, a rare ability that seems a contradiction. When using mixed media, he often utilizes penwork to hold the form, offer detail, and manipulate the eye to follow his design pattern, applying color or toned wash as casual as the linework itself.

Watching Kossin work in pen-and-ink from a live model is sheer delight. In sketch classes conducted at the Society of Illustrators in New York City, sheets filled with completed figure drawings fly off his pad as if being pumped out of a drawing machine, and there is little difference in quality between the three-minute, five-minute, and ten-minute poses inasmuch as the essence of the pose has been captured completely in perhaps the first minute, anyway. Through the years I have purchased many of these drawings at the Society of Illustrators' annual auction sale (all proceeds going to that institution's celebrated Art Scholarship fund) for the enjoyment of showing them to my own drawing and illustration classes at the School of Visual Arts. My purpose is not to use Kossin's work as examples of what my students should do, but rather what can be done by an artist who bypasses thinking for the sheer pleasure of responsive drawing—and in three minutes or less!

—© 2008, Nick Meglin

Illustration for *The Shadow*, Bantam Books.
Acrylic on gesso board, 22" x 15"

Illustration for "The Long Alley," by Rick Rubin, *Argosy*, October 1960. Tusche on board, 20" x 18"

Kossin in the studio he shared with Mitchell Hooks, New York, 1970s

THE REAL SANDY KOSSIN by Murray Tinkelman

To paraphrase an oft-quoted line from a popular TV show of the 1950s, "Will the real Sandy Kossin please stand up?"

The truth is that there are many "real" Sandy Kossins. There's Sandy Kossin the illustrator, who created torrid romance covers for the paperback industry. There's the Kossin who painted movie posters for Columbia Pictures, 20th Century Fox, United Artists, and Paramount Pictures.

There is also the artist who in 1963 for *LIFE* magazine illustrated the historic events that took place during the "Bay of Pigs" invasion at the height of the cold war.

And if that's not enough, there is the outrageously funny, baggy pants, humorous illustrator that has performed his magic for magazines as diverse as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *MAD* magazine.

All of the above are the real Sandy Kossin. His half-century of success in all of these diverse genres is due to one underlying strength. That strength is draftsmanship. Simply put, he draws like an angel. His drawing skills inform all of his work. The quality of his line may be subtle and probing, or dynamically expressive, but it is always profoundly sensitive.

So when the real Sandy Kossin stands up, you will see a crowd.

Murray Tinkelman, Illustrator
Professor of Art, Syracuse University

Illustration for *Redbook*, 1958. Gouache on board, 20" x 12"

Illustration for "The Death of Don Juan," by Ellery Queen, *Argosy*, May 1962. Tusche on gesso board

Illustration for *Redbook*, 1960. Gouache on board, 12" x 14"

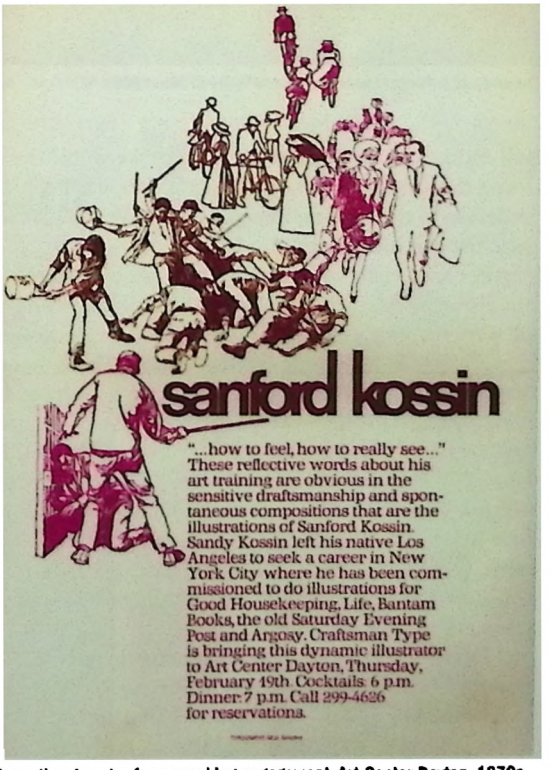
KOSSIN ON KOSSIN by Sandy Kossin

I was born and raised in Los Angeles in 1926, and I discovered my artistic talents in grade school. My teachers recognized I had talent, and had me doing murals, posters, and crayon drawings, which won school awards. But I think I saw my future as an artist when I did crayon copies, on oak tag, of the seven dwarfs from the then-popular *Snow White* movie—and sold them to my peers for five cents a piece! Wow! What success!

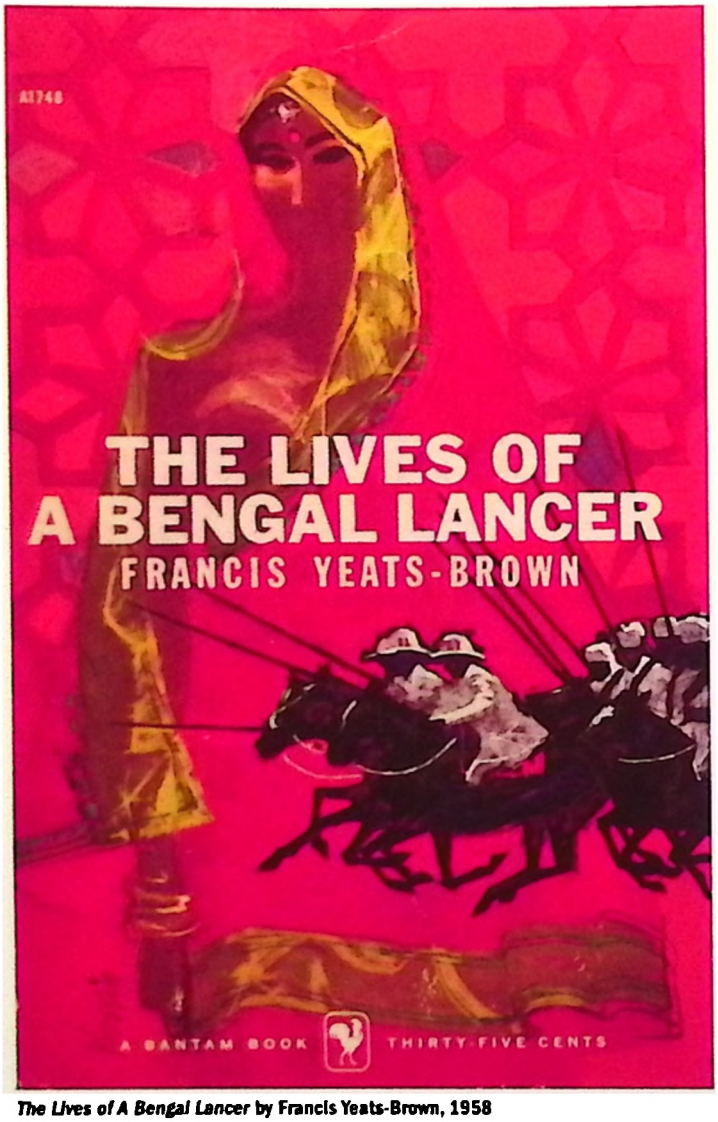
In junior high school the faculty excused me from classes so I could create murals for the print shop, and the cafeteria, and for illustrating the school paper with linoleum block prints. It was very valuable experience, since it taught me to come up rapidly with picture concepts and lettering.

In the high school art classes, I was doing award winning posters, two years in a row, for the City Wide Community Chest Poster Contest, and the March Of Dimes. These projects got me mentioned and photographed in local newspapers, and helped make up my mind to become an illustrator. But WWII put that dream on hold, when, upon graduating, I joined the Navy, and served as a Sonarman doing anti-submarine warfare until 1946. After my discharge, I used my GI Bill to attend Jepson Art School in Los Angeles.

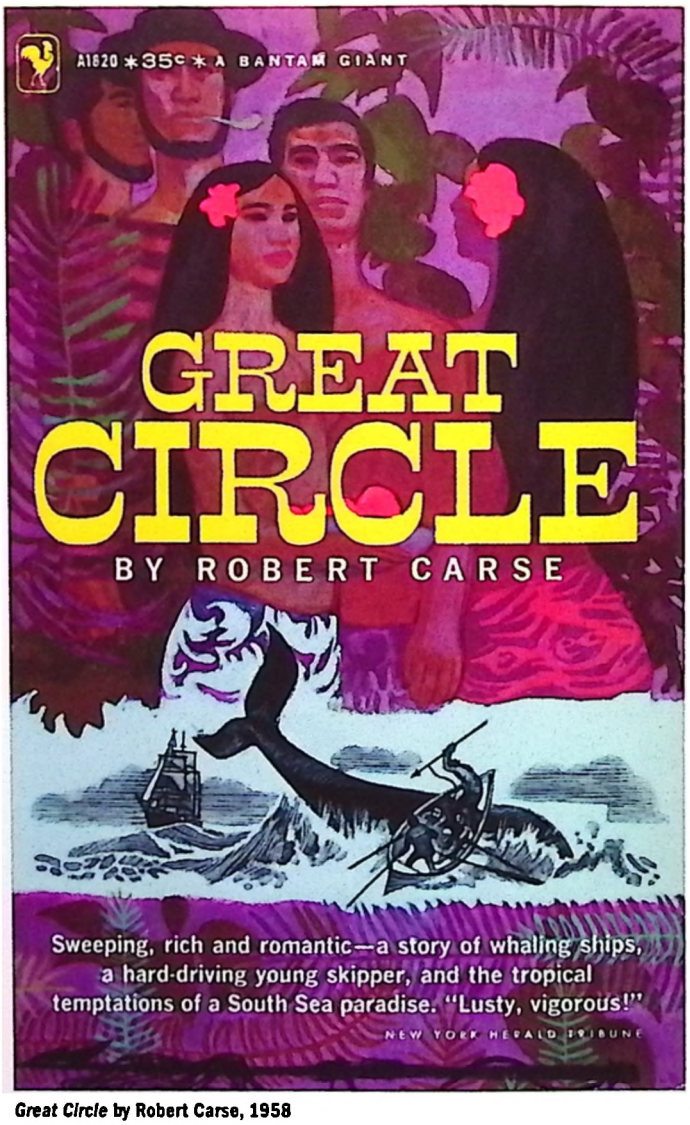
That's when things got really exciting! I was lucky enough to have a truly great artist and teacher, Rico LeBrun, who taught not only the disciplines of "form," but how to "really see," and in so doing opened my eyes and senses to the possibilities of exciting picture-making. Along with a few other students, we would drive into Mexico for the



Promotional poster for a speaking engagement, Art Center Dayton, 1970s



The Lives of A Bengal Lancer by Francis Yeats-Brown, 1958

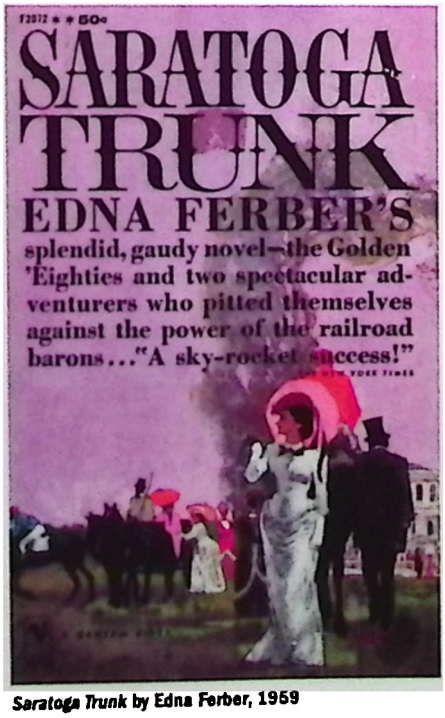


Great Circle by Robert Carse, 1958

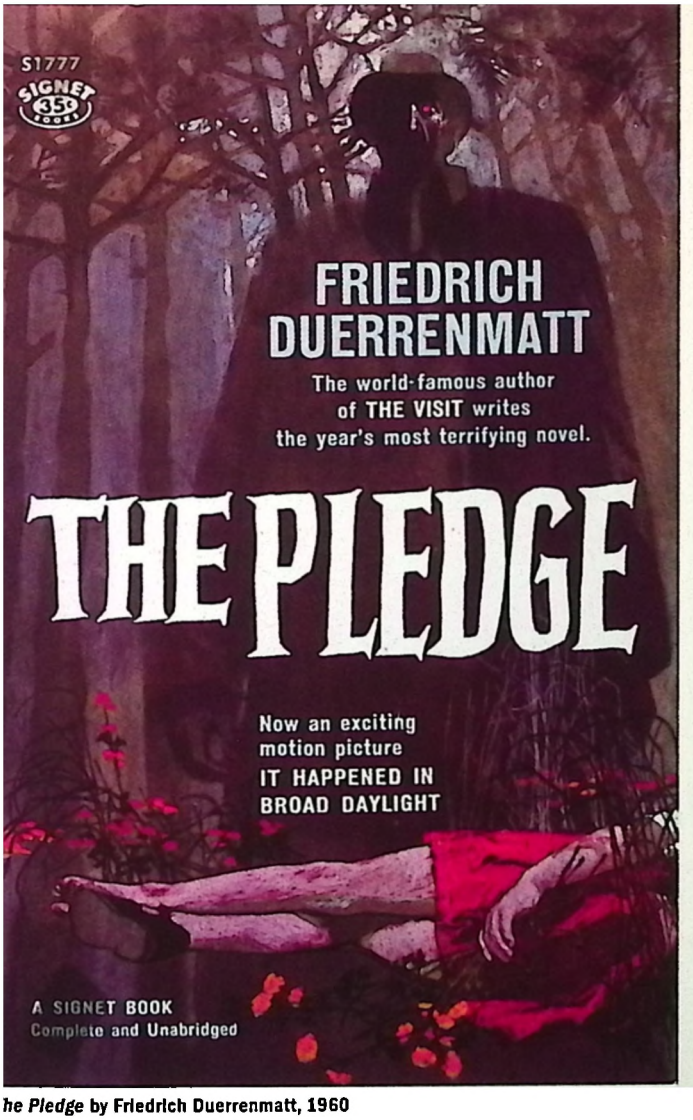
bull fights and attend circuses, where we would spend hours doing drawings of bulls, toreros, animals and people. I finally understood the true excitement of DRAWING! A really energetic time of life for me!

After four years of school where I not only learned to draw, but also to create lithographs, silk screens, and design, I decided, with the prompting of a friend, to take a portfolio of drawings to New York to "try out the waters." Once there, I found that art directors at that time (1952) were impressed with the drawings, and I was surprised to find I was getting assignments to do story illustration for *Parents* magazine, and humorous 2-color illustrations for *Children's Digest*, and *Tom Thumb* magazine—all on the basis of showing classroom drawings! And it was here that I learned to come up with dramatic concepts, mainly black and white, which helped me get work from *Galaxy* magazine, *Beyond*, and *Amazing Stories*—for which I was paid twenty dollars a page!

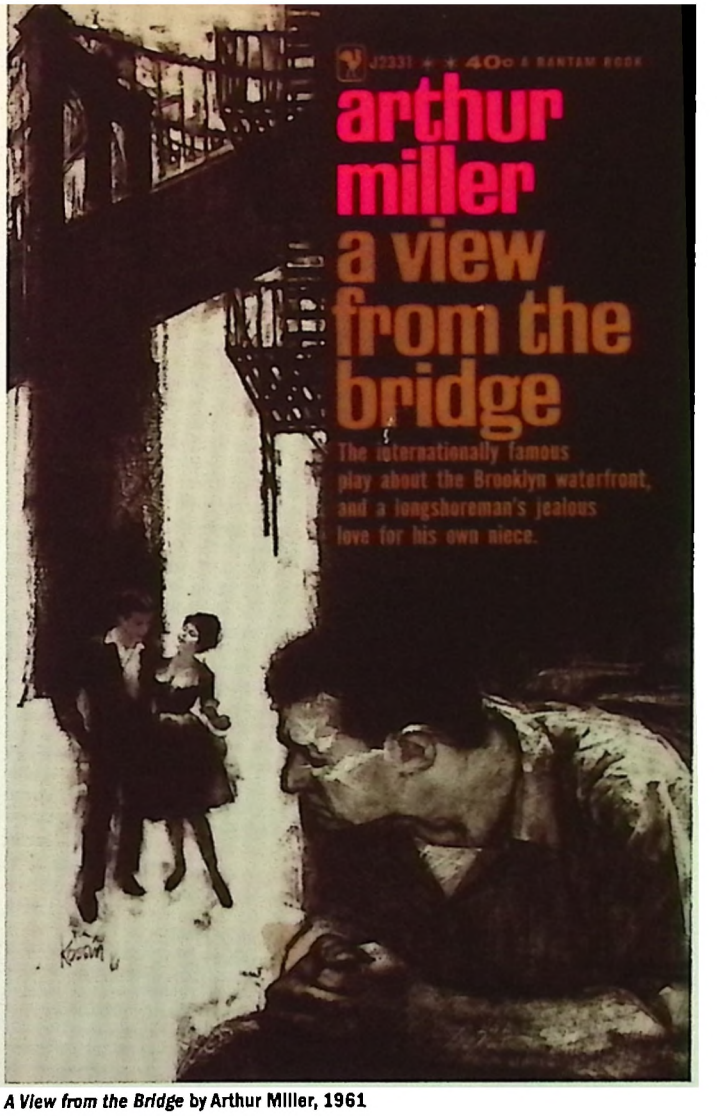
These science fiction and fantasy magazines were very popular in the '50s, and I was kept busy doing them and the children's magazines—all black and white illustrations—quite often having to stay up all night to meet a deadline. In those



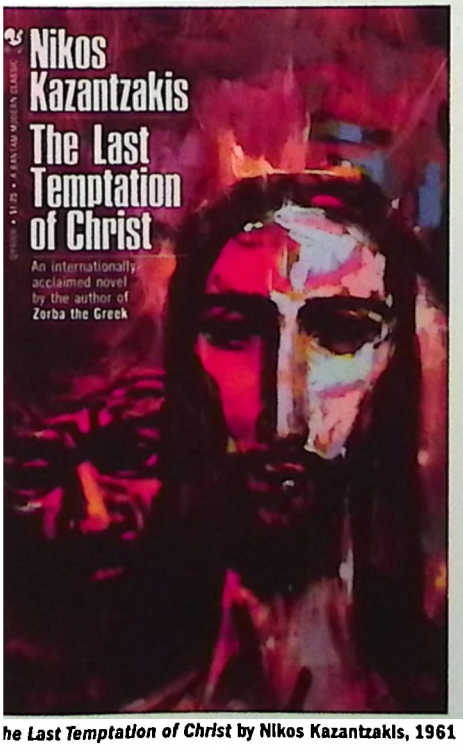
Saratoga Trunk by Edna Ferber, 1959



he Pledge by Friedrich Duerrenmatt, 1960

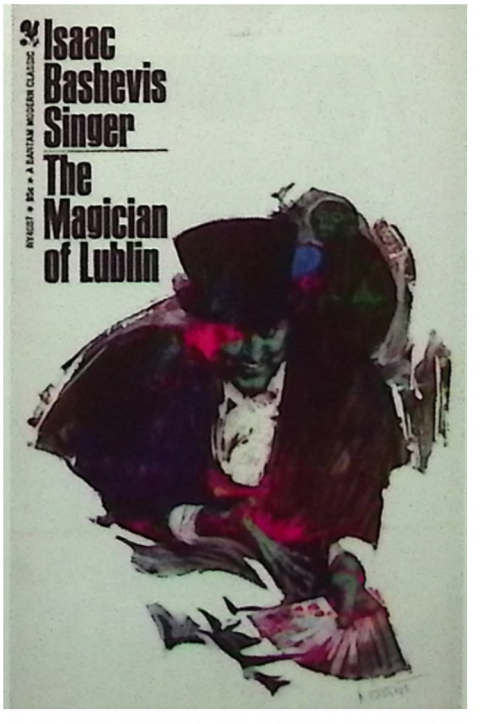


A View from the Bridge by Arthur Miller, 1961

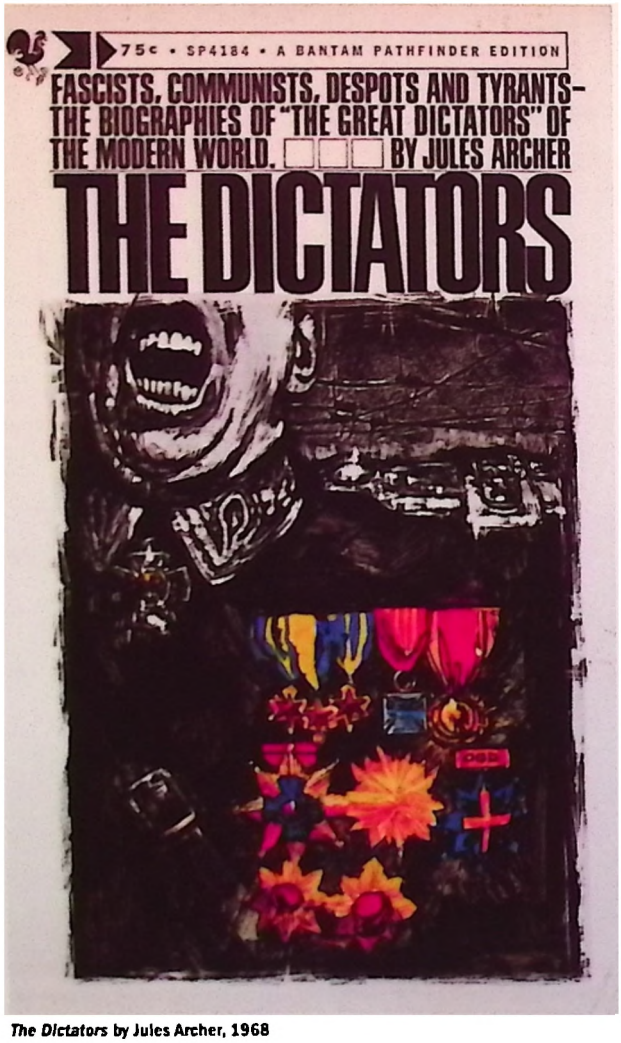


he Last Temptation of Christ by Nikos Kazantzakis, 1961

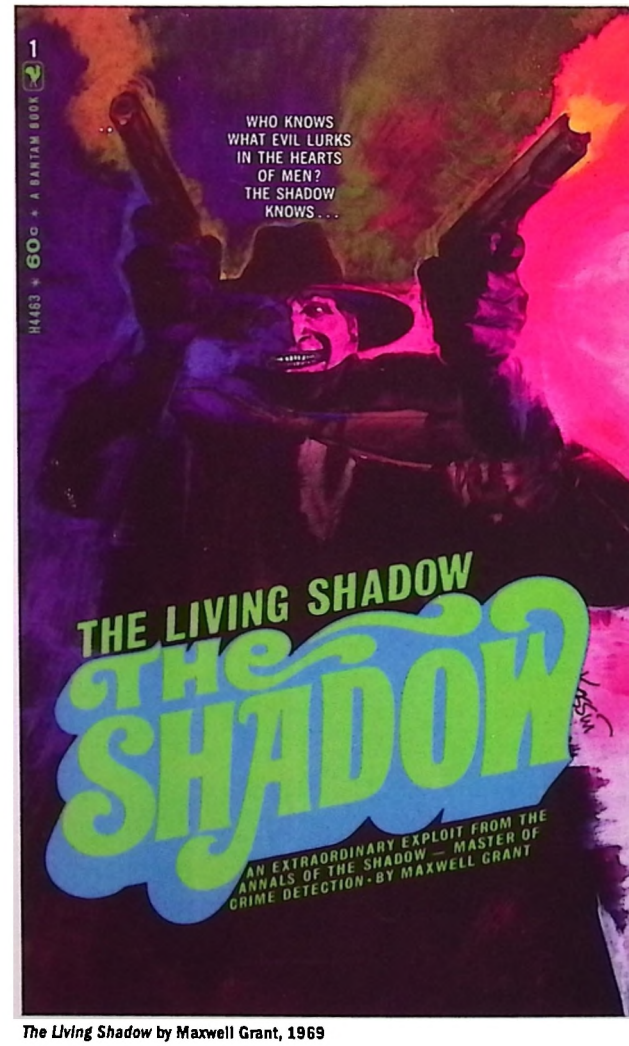
Shiloh by Shelby Foote, 1961



The Magician of Lublin by Isaac Bashevis Singer, 1964



The Dictators by Jules Archer, 1968



The Living Shadow by Maxwell Grant, 1969

Interior illustration for *Good Housekeeping*, 1965

days twenty dollars was enough to pay for living expenses, theatre, and rent for my fifth floor walk-up on East 40th Street. There I had a small drawing table next to the fire escape window, which, when open, let in soot that permeated the table and floor, and made it necessary to cover my artwork with a sheet of paper for protection. Since I had no air conditioner, during hot summers I had to lay a kitchen towel under my forearm when working on a tracing pad to keep sweat from wrinkling the paper. To do a finished drawing, I would tape the tracing paper-rough to the glass of the window, and tape the Strathmore over it, and then trace my finished drawing in ink. Pretty clumsy. I soon went out and purchased a real light box. A great help!

About this time I was taking my new portfolio of *Galaxy* and *Amazing* reproductions to the various magazines in town, when I ran into Bill George, an alumnus of the Jepson School who was also doing illustration work. He helped find other neophytes from Jepson—Dave Jonas, and Vince Mancini—and together we decided to rent space for a studio. This worked very nicely, since we had rooms for each of us, the ability to get

a critique when needed, and we could also use each other as models for our pictures.

I used this arrangement to work on developing my first full-color samples for my portfolio. I began experimenting using a painterly gouache line instead of ink, and painted figures in various strong color-values to achieve drama and design, with the hope of getting work from paperback publishers. When I had done four or five samples I was happy with—and my group indicated their approval—Bill George, who was doing paperbacks, suggested I show the portfolio to Len Leone, art director at Bantam Books. I made an appointment to see him and found him very enthusiastic about my work, and he immediately gave me assignments on two mysteries: *He Who Whispers*, and *Patrick Butler for the Defense*, followed by a long list of more mysteries like *The Shadow* series, *'Till Death Do Us Part*, and "A" list books, among them *A View from the Bridge* and *Exodus*. In all, I produced over 300 covers for Bantam Books over a twenty-five year relationship, and a couple hundred assignments for Pocket Books, Signet (New American Library), Pyramid Books, Avon Books, Ballantine Books, Berkley Books, Dell Publishing, St. Martins Press, Fawcett, and Warner Books, where I did some more really exciting and challenging art.

I was commissioned by Bantam to do court room sketches for a book on the retrial of the famous Dr. Sam Sheppard murder case. I joined the team of lawyers led by

Illustration for *Houdini's Escapes* by Walter B. Gibson, Bantam Books, 1976. Magic Marker, gouache, and Elmer's Glue on board, 20" x 15"

Jessie Wilcox Smith
Twas the Night Before Christmas
Oil on board
18" x 17"; 1912
Cover for the book:
Twas The Night Before Christmas
by Clement C. Moore

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Beckett one-sheet movie poster, 1967

Illustration for *Beckett*, 1967. Acrylic on board

Illustration for *Avanti*, 1973. Acrylic on board

F. Lee Bailey. But because of the judges' new regulations on not allowing drawings to be done in court, I had to do them from memory outside the court on the hoods of cars. The book became an overwhelming success in 1966.

My work was being accepted now by the women's service magazines: *Redbook*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Womans Day*, and I was doing "boy-girl" illustrations. I was doing work for *Argosy*, and *Cavalier* magazine for men, that included heavy dramatic story concepts, and even light humorous illustration. I was wearing a lot of hats! This was turning out to be a great developing time for me, with all of these different assignments.

Eventually our studio group broke up, with us all going our own separate ways, and Artist's Representative Joe Mendola asked me to join his group of artists. He soon brought me movie poster commissions from United Artists, Paramount and 20th Century Fox, which included movies like *Beckett*, *Devil's Brigade*, *The Train*, *Cold Turkey*, *Avanti*, *The Last Valley*, *King of the Gypsies*, *What A Lovely War*, *Hannibal Brooks*, and others.

After a couple of good years, Mendola and I parted and I went back to free-lancing. Months later I was asked to join a service studio, just opened, called New Center Studios. Shared by five other artists, with three sales people to take our work around, they brought in several exciting jobs for me to do for

Illustration for *King of the Gypsies*, 1979. Acrylic on board

Illustration for *Hannibal Brooks*, 1969. Acrylic on board

Illustration for *The Last Valley*, 1971. Ink on board

ABOVE: Illustrations for *The Train*, 1965. Tusche on gesso board

LIFE, May 10, 1963

Illustration

LIFE

The Untold Battle Story of the Men on the Beach at the Bay of Pigs

We Who Tried

At midnight on April 16, 1961, Cuban patriots landed on a remote beach of their homeland. Their mission: to liberate Cuba. Much has been reported—and speculated—about the debacle, but the missing ingredient has been the full account of what actually happened on the beaches as remembered by the men who fought there. This remarkable story—often heroic, always chaotic and finally heart-rending—begins in this drawing as the first assault wave wades ashore past a dead Castro sentry.

Interior illustration for "The Bay of Pigs," *LIFE*, May 10, 1963, pages 20-21

LIFE magazine in 1963: I was commissioned to recreate the "Bay Of Pigs" fiasco with ninteen black and white, and second-color drawings, plus a full-color cover painting...within a 21 day deadline! I was being given most of the magazine for the illustrations. The editors even sent some of the released Cuban members of the raid to my studio to check my preliminary sketches for accuracy, and then I had to come up with a solution that would do the best job in such short order. Using litho-crayon and tusche (used in silkscreening and lithography) on gesso panels turned out to be the answer. Working night and day, I got the assignment in on time. A wonderfully exciting job! Probably the most exciting of my career!

The assassination of President Kennedy, in November 1963, had me called quickly, once again, to the offices of Life's editors, where art director Bernie Quint put together a working layout for me to fill with drawings of the event, since there was no photo information to use as reference, except for file pictures of the buildings. Since the magazine was a weekly, I was told that these drawings had to be done by the next morning so they could be flown to Chicago where the magazine

Interior illustration for "The Bay of Pigs," *LIFE*, May 10, 1963, page 22

Interior Illustration for "Storm Over Stuffed Kishka," by Gerald Kersh. *Argosy*, November 1968. Acrylic on board

Cover Illustration for *Children's Digest*, 1971. Gouache on board

Illustration for *Questions from the Bookpile*, Bantam, 1971. Gouache on board

was printed and distributed. The Life Building was four blocks away from New Center Studios, where I was obviously going to spend a long night. I ran back to the studio and immediately began designing and drawing the events. It was just after 1:00 a.m. that I received a phone call from *LIFE*'s art director telling me to "Hold off. Something has come up." The next day I found out what the "something" was. The magazine had purchased the now famous Zapruder film, and would be using it rather than my drawings. That's life...excuse the pun...

This assignment was followed by *LIFE* assigning me to do seven illustrations for "The Memoirs of General Douglas MacArthur," which ran for two issues in January (the 17th and 24th), 1964. The original artwork is now on the walls of the MacArthur Memorial Museum in Norfolk, Virginia. The General was kind enough to autograph a proof, of which I'm very proud, and I have it framed and hanging on my wall. Another memorable assignment!

Of course, I did more work for publishers other than just *LIFE* magazine. On a regular basis, I did some equally exciting work for the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Argosy*, *Reader's Digest*, and their Condensed Books, *Boys' Life*, *Scouting*. I produced both dramatic and humorous illustrations, and zany works for young people's books and magazines. I really enjoyed doing these sorts of illustrations. I probably would have been a cartoonist if I hadn't made a "left turn" into dramatic drawings and paintings.

Interior Illustration for "MacArthur's Memoirs," *LIFE*, January 17, 1964, page 72

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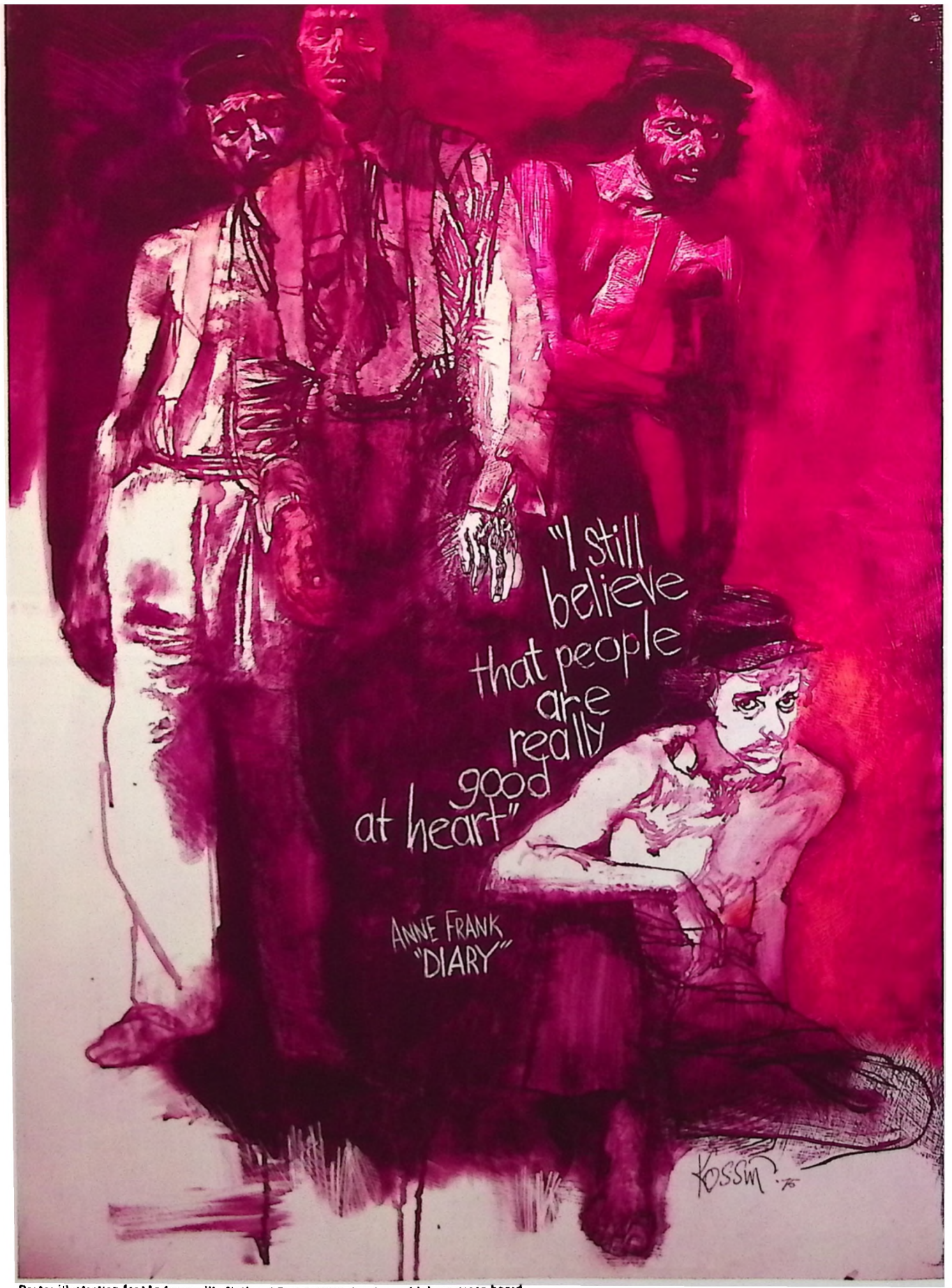
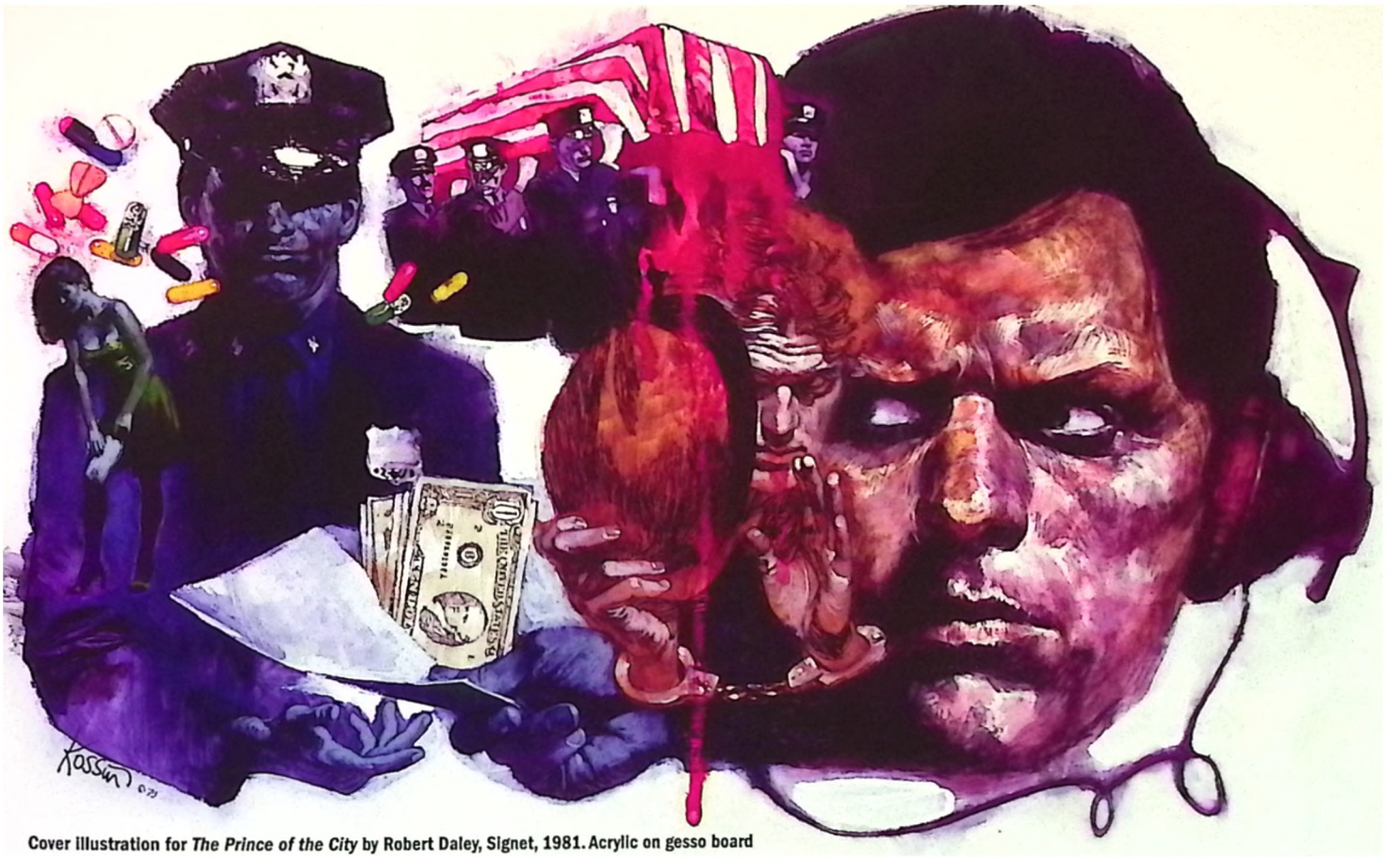


Poster illustration for "Andersonville National Park," 1975. Acrylic and ink on gesso board



Cover illustration for *The Prince of the City* by Robert Daley, Signet, 1981. Acrylic on gesso board

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Good Housekeeping - July 1973

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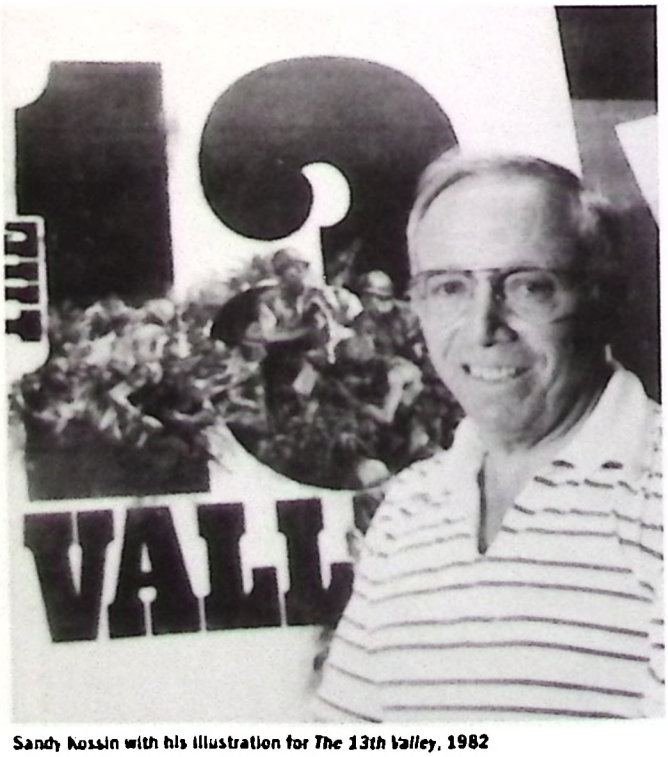
Cover illustration for *The Eighth Sun*, Signet, 1979. Tusche and ink on gesso board



Sandy Kossin with his illustration for *The 13th Valley*, 1982

My work has been featured in an article in *American Artist* magazine (May 1969); the book *200 Years of American Illustration*; *The Illustrator In America, 1900-1960*, *The Illustrator In America 1880-1980*, and *The Illustrator in America 1860-2000*, by Walt Reed; and in the Society of Illustrators Annual books.

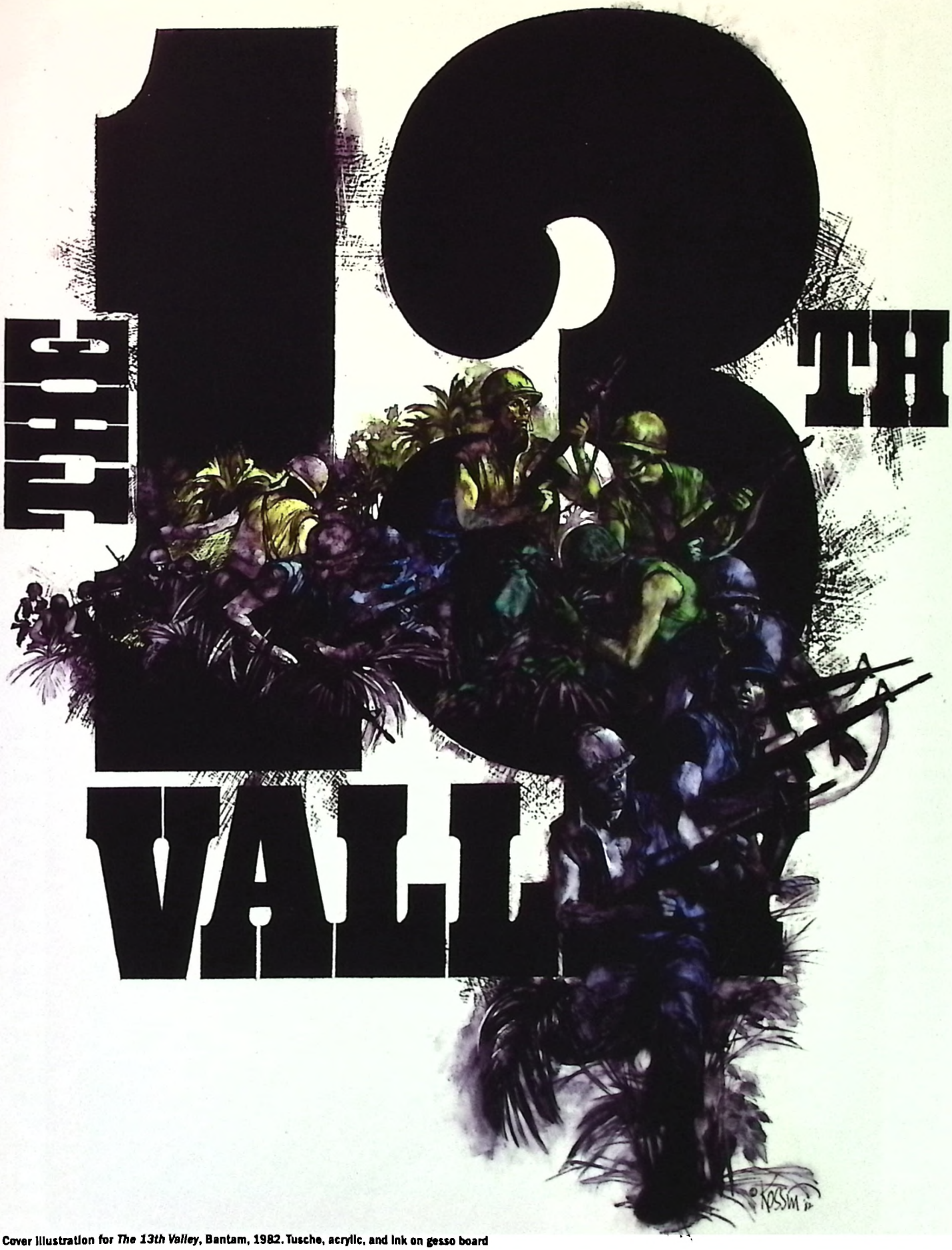
While doing my commercial work, I taught a drawing class at Parsons School of Design part-time for ten years, and I am still flattered by ex-students telling me of their successes. The computer as an art tool has become more prevalent, and magazines are no longer using story art. Paperback covers are going for Photoshop copies of posed models. Time for me to "throw in the towel!"

My wife Josephine and I live in Port Washington, Long Island, where I still have my studio. Although I don't do much commercial work, I do experimental drawing and painting...just to keep my hand in it, and maybe turn it into a gallery exhibition.

—© 2008 by Sanford Kossin

Write to Sanford Kossin at sandykossin@earthlink.net.

Nick Meglin has been on the editorial staff of *MAD* magazine for over 50 years. Murray Tinkelman is an illustrator, and is a Professor of Art at Syracuse University.



Cover illustration for *The 13th Valley*, Bantam, 1982. Tusche, acrylic, and ink on gesso board

Weird Tales, December 1930

Hugh Doak Rankin

by John Osier

In his art, he was Jekyll and Hyde. Hugh Doak Rankin effectively illustrated some of the most chilling horror stories of the twentieth century for *Weird Tales* pulp magazine, yet drew genial pictures for children's stories like "Arabelle and Wiggelywumps," and *The Campfire Girls in Old Kentucky*.

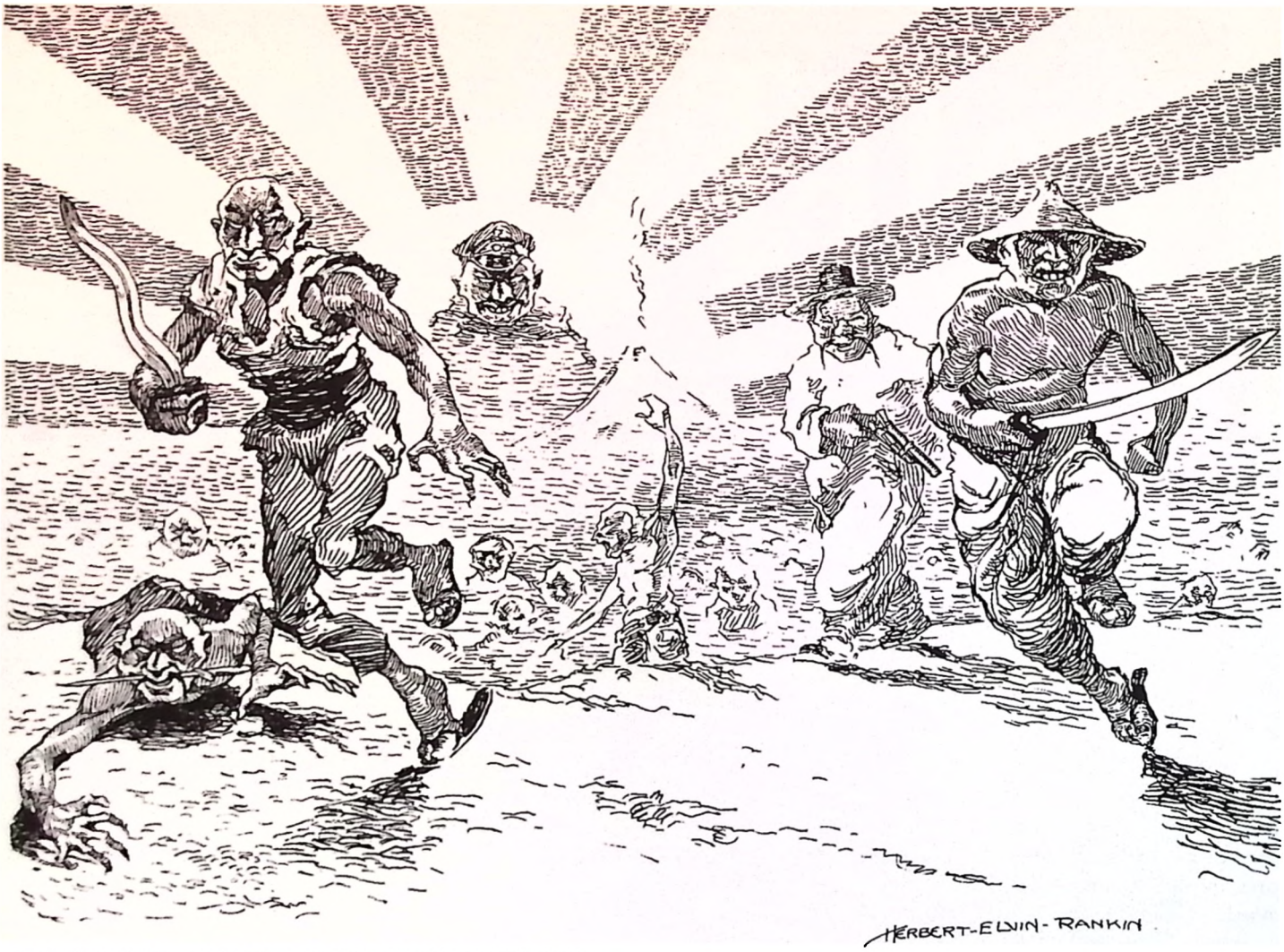
While other *Weird Tales* illustrators such as Virgil Finlay, Margaret Brundage, J. Allen St. John, Hannes Bok, and Lee Brown Coye have received attention in books and articles, little has been written about Rankin—although many of his covers and interior illustrations are among the most striking in the magazine's history. He was the first notable artist to work for the magazine and dominated its interiors during the late 1920s and early '30s.

That the man himself is a shadowy figure could be considered fitting, since his interior art work in *Weird Tales* often had a shadowy quality resulting from his preferred medium of grease pencil used on textured board, which combined with heavy shading to produce a mysterious quality well suited to stories of the strange and supernatural. Although at times these drawings did not reproduce well on the rough pulp pages, other times the results were startlingly effective—evoking an eerie atmosphere with a dream-like, other worldly quality that such skilled horror illustrators as Coye and Finlay, with their graphic literalness, never were quite able to achieve.

Rankin's style combined with his ability to portray gruesome scenes and creatures worked well illustrating tales for the most famous of *Weird Tales* horror writers, H. P. Lovecraft. Lovecraft's stories often depend on carefully building from a realistic beginning to a final revelation of horror and loathsomeness most artists would find difficult to depict. With his dark grease pencil drawings Rankin was able to capture this stuff of nightmares. One example is his illustration for Lovecraft's classic "The Dunwich Horror." Rankin's version of the revelation of Wilbur Whatley's monstrous brother has been referred to by Robert Weinberg in *The Weird Tales Story* as "one of the best pieces of art ever to appear" in the magazine. In Lovecraft's story "Pickman's Model" Rankin drew a subterranean creature that predates and curiously resembles a sinister version of the Grinch in the Dr. Seuss story *The Grinch That Stole Christmas*. For Lovecraft's seminal mythos story "The Call of Cthulhu," Rankin showed the frenzy of the naked dancers capering around the idol of their god in one of his most memorable renderings.

Besides Lovecraft, he illustrated dozens of *Weird Tales* stories by authors ranging from the now famous Robert E. Howard to almost forgotten writers like Adolphe de Castro and H. Warner Munn. For Castro's tale "The Last Test," appearing in 1928, he drew a phantasmagoric bacchanal of strange creatures Hieronymus Bosch might have envied. For another 1928 story by Munn titled "The Chain," he drew the climactic scene in which the protagonist, tortured with a fiery chain by the husband he had cuckolded, hallucinates the nude figure of his lover, the man's wife just before death. The Munn story is effective, but in stories by some of the lesser known writers often the most memorable thing about them were the Rankin illustrations.

During the late '20s he frequently illustrated entire issues of *Weird Tales*, and given the number of his drawings it is remarkable so many were of high quality considering that pulp magazine illustration in general was often considered hack

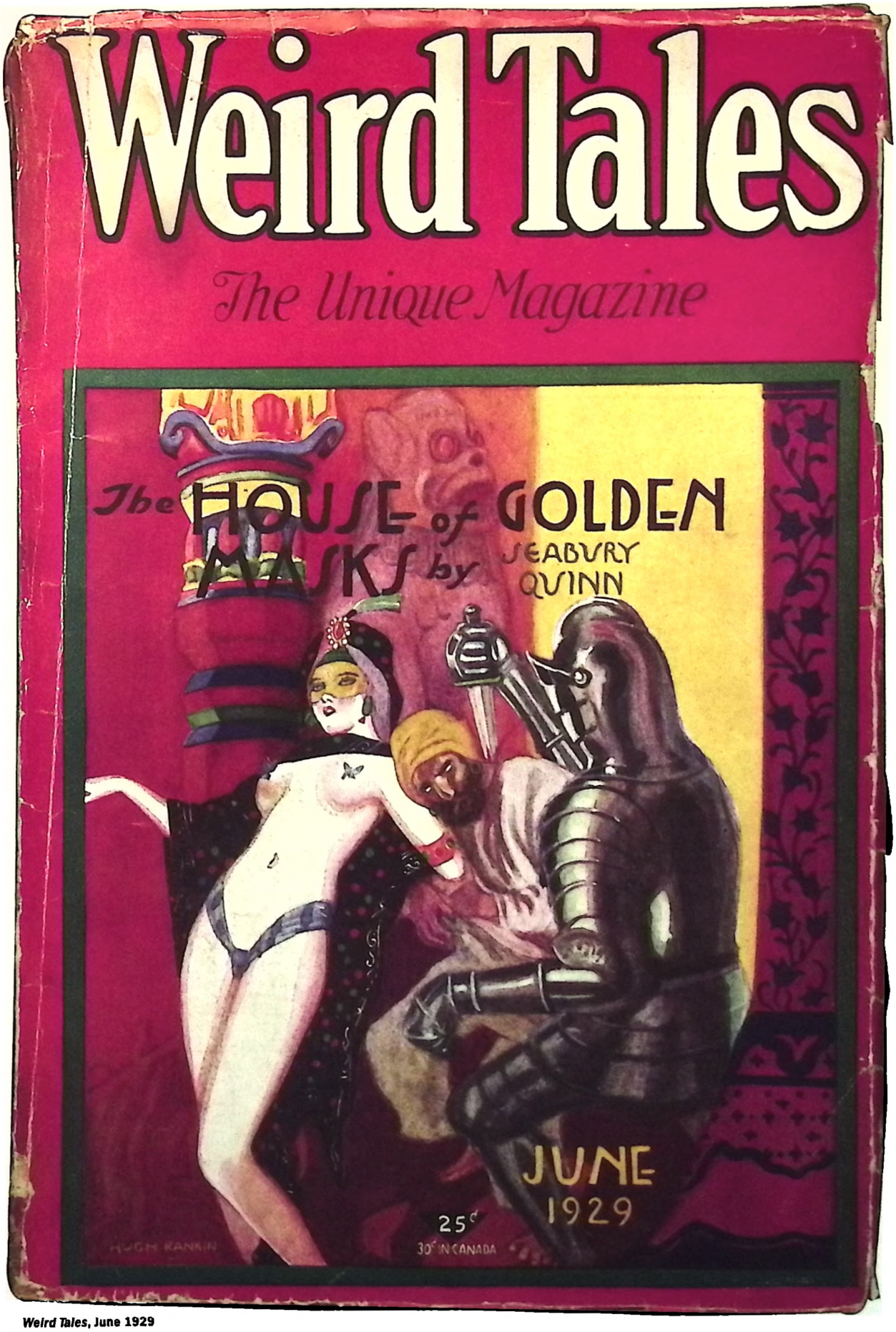


Interior illustration for an unidentified publication. Signed Herbert Elvin Rankin

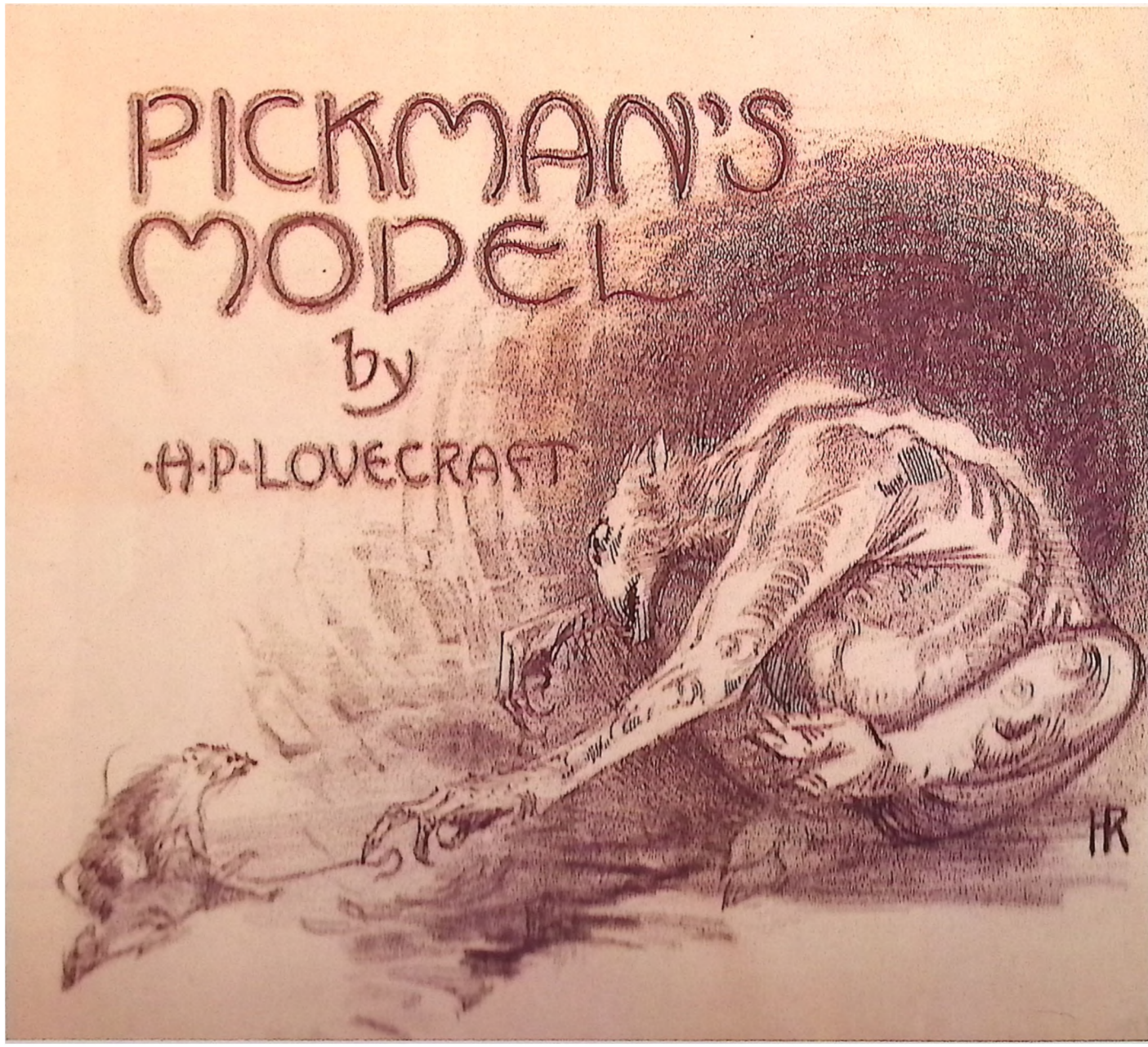
***Weird Tales*, August 1927**

work to be cranked out as quickly as possible. Rankin was not exempt from the pressures of deadlines and some of his work, no doubt, was dashed off to fulfill a certain quota. Besides using grease pencil for interiors, he also drew in pen and ink and produced line drawings that he sometimes signed Doak. The line drawings lack the panache of his grease pencil work and his color illustration.

Some of his finest work went into his *Weird Tales* covers. In all he did fifteen beginning with the August 1927 issue for Otis Adelbert Kline's story "The Bride of Osiris." Rankin painted in watercolor and charcoal a scantily clad woman menaced by a shrouded figure in an Egyptian temple. It is arguably his best cover, and conveys an uneasy mixture of beauty and weirdness. Another cover for Seabury Quinn's "The House of Golden Masks," June 1929, shows a turbaned man clutching a lovely nude as a strange armored figure plunges a dagger into him. The contrast between the art deco background and the lurid tableau of the foreground produces another queer mix of the strange and beautiful. Rankin's sinuous nude was not the first displayed on the magazine's cover. Earlier artists like Joseph Doolin and C. Barker Petrie had done cover nudes for the magazine, and later Margaret Brundage would become the most famous *Weird Tales* artist for her nude covers. Yet Ray Russell, writing a tribute to Brundage in a *Playboy* magazine article in 1991, noted that Rankin was the only other *W.T.* artist who offered "worthy competition" to Brundage in painting nudes.



Weird Tales, June 1929



Interior Illustration for "Pickman's Model," by H.P. Lovecraft, *Weird Tales*, October 1927. Grease pencil on board, 6" x 6.75". Image courtesy of Robert Weinberg

While Brundage's nude covers increased the magazine's sales, Rankin's nude and semi-nude covers were never merely eye candy. He always injected an element of sinister ambiguity along with the beauty, as in the February 1929 cover for "The Star Stealers" by Edmond Hamilton. Against a yellow background, a one-eyed Octopus-like creature wraps tentacles around a long-haired lovely in a diaphanous outfit and her male companion. The monster clutches a red flail in one tentacle while two disembodied, birdlike, and crimson hands with protruding serpents reach toward the girl's hair. On first glance it may seem like just another "beauty and beast" picture, but the two human figures are climbing up an incline toward some indefinable goal only to be thwarted by the creature and additionally threatened by the strange hands. Are the two humans meant to be Adam and Eve representing mankind's attempt to reach a higher plane, yet denied by fate embodied by the monster? The ambiguity of the cover suggests some of the ambiguity found in the artist himself. Rankin was physically imposing, yet according to a friend he was content to remain in the background, quiet and diffident. He was capable of warm friendship, yet much of his life he was a loner who never married. And in the subject matter of his art he veered from playful humor to the dark and macabre.

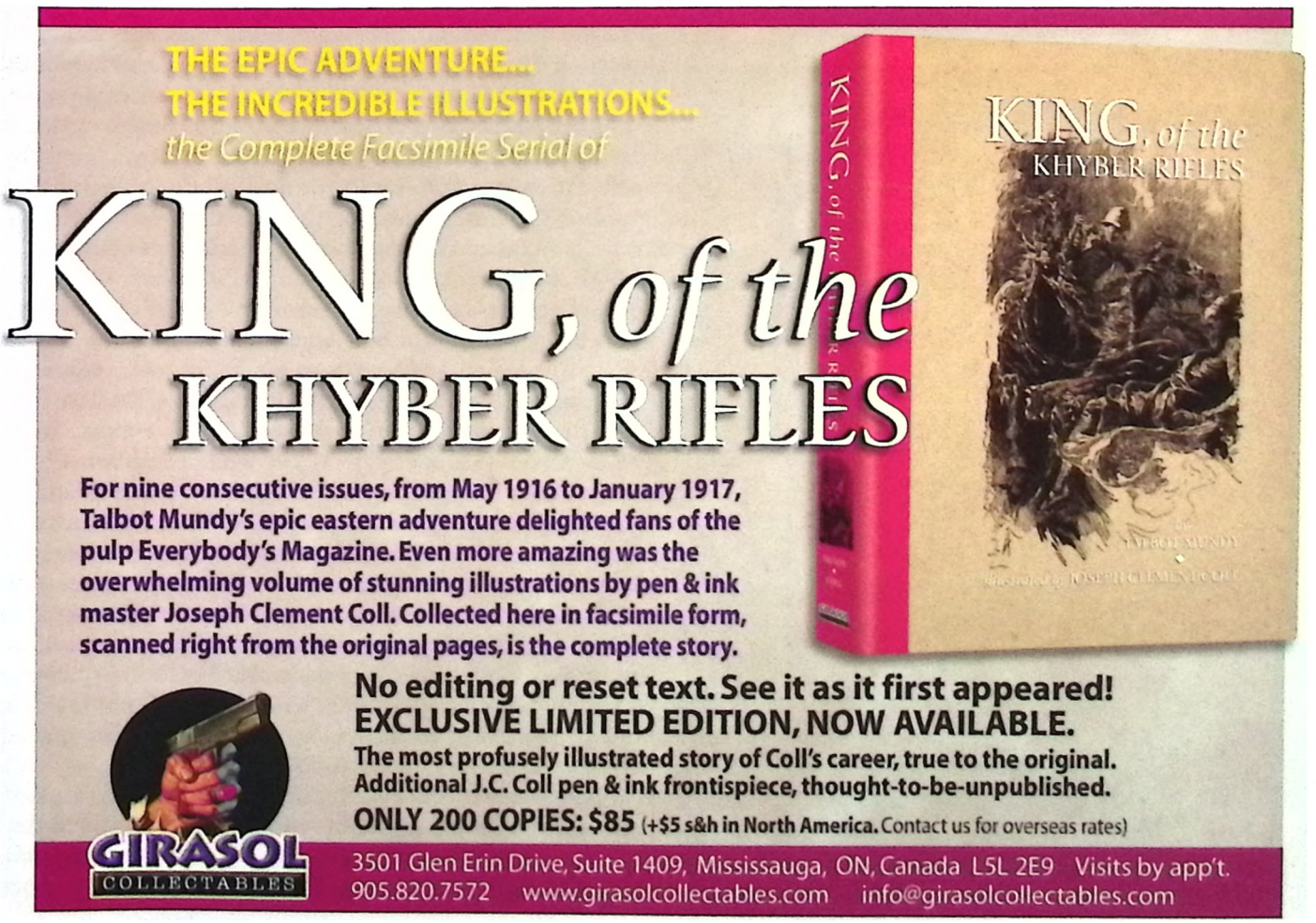
Hugh Rankin was born in Illinois on July 2, 1878, son to William H. Copp and Ellen M. Rankin. Little is known about his father, but Ellen Rankin was a talented sculptor. Her grandfather John Rankin was a Presbyterian minister and pioneer abolitionist. Ellen modeled a bronze bust of him and unveiled it at a dedication ceremony in 1892 in Ripley, Ohio shortly before Hugh turned four. She also did notable sculpture work for the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. While Hugh was still a child his parents divorced, and he grew up living with

Ellen in Chicago. That he chose to use his mother's maiden name most of his life suggests he must have felt some estrangement toward his father. Hugh surely inherited his artistic bent from Ellen and perhaps received early tutoring from her in drawing. No record has turned up on where he received more formal art training, but given his skill it would seem probable that he did study art somewhere in the Chicago area.

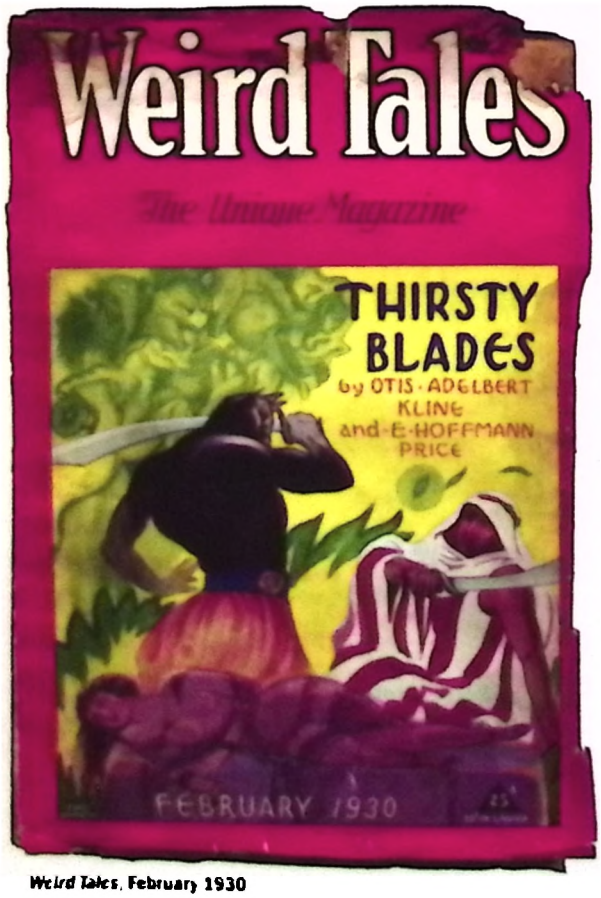
When he reached adulthood, he continued to live in Chicago. In 1898 he tried to enlist in the Spanish American War, a friend says, but was rejected! However, when the United States entered World War I, he enlisted in the Army at age 39 as a private. Army records show he served from March 1918 until April 1919. It is unlikely that he got overseas, because by the time he finished training the war was almost over.

The same year he received his army discharge he illustrated *The Campfire Girls in Old Kentucky* by Margaret Love Sanderson. *The Campfire Girls* was a popular series of illustrated juvenile books written by different women authors. The early decades of the twentieth century are often referred to as The Golden Age of Illustration in books and magazines. Myriad artists competed for commissions, and as Hugh struggled to make a name for himself in the field, at the top of the heap were illustrious names like Howard Pyle, N.C. Wyeth, Jessie Wilcox Smith, Harvey Dunn and James Montgomery Flagg. The next year, 1920, he illustrated another juvenile tale, Anna Forbes Liddell's *Arabelle and Wiggellywumps*, which appeared in several installments in *Holland's* magazine. Hugh's drawings for this children's tale show jolly giants, delicate fairies, and cheerful gnomes, with no hint of the frightening or outré. But they are done in grease pencil, the medium he would employ with such effect in later horror illustrations. In 1922 he illustrated another juvenile, *Through the Ages with Father Time* by Roy Rutherford Bailey. It was published in Chicago. This time his paintings appeared with those by another illustrator, Harold DeLay, who also would later do work in *Weird Tales*. For his book Bailey got permission to use paintings the pair had done for the Elgin National Watch Company. What other advertising art Rankin might have been doing at the time is not known, yet clearly he was not confining himself only to fiction illustration. His pictures for *Father Time*, like the earlier commissions, are genial with bucolic nature scenes, children and lovely women. Several have a misty look foreshadowing again the *Weird Tales* illustrations.

In May 1923 the first issue of *Weird Tales* magazine appeared on news stands, the brainchild of Jacob Clark Henneberger, an ex-journalist. As the title indicated, its contents were devoted to stories of the strange and bizarre. Against all odds it would become one of the longest running pulp magazines



Weird Tales, August 1929



Weird Tales, February 1930

in history. The 1920s and '30s were the heyday of pulp magazines. Millions of people read a bewildering range of titles, from prestige adventure pulps like *Argosy*, to detective, Western, romance, sports, science fiction pulps, and truly esoteric pulps like *Zeppelin Stories* and *Doctor Death*. Called pulps because of the cheap pulpwood paper used in their pages, they provided mass entertainment in an era before paperback books and television. Many pulp titles lasted only an issue or two before folding. In 1924 Henneberger decided to move the editorial office of his financially floundering magazine from Indianapolis to Chicago, and installed Farnsworth Wright as editor. Both proved astute moves, and of benefit to Rankin.

Living in Chicago, Rankin must have seen the magazine as a convenient market. Curtis Senf, a Chicago journeyman illustrator, was already contributing art to the pulp. Later, other Chicago artists like Brundage and J. Allen St. John, the definitive *Tarzan* illustrator, would do the same. Rankin, then almost fifty, visited the editorial office and submitted samples of his work to Wright who wanted to upgrade the caliber of art then appearing in the magazine. As a canny editor, he had managed to put the magazine on a sound financial footing by the time Rankin showed up, and he was able to pay illustrators more than the magazine had in the past. Soon Rankin became a regular contributor. He would do work for the magazine until well into the next decade. On one of his visits to the editorial office, Hugh met the writer E. Hoffman Price and they became good friends. Rankin's second cover assignment for the December 1927 issue was for Hoffman's "The Infidel's Daughter," having earlier done an interior illustration for Hoffman's "Saladin's Throne-Rug" in October of that year, featuring an attractive nude scrutinized by a glowering black figure.

In his memoir *The Book of the Dead*, Hoffman described Rankin as standing over six feet tall, with thick black hair, a muscular physique, and the "rugged angular face" of an adventure story hero—adding he also distinguished himself as a "good listener." The two, joined by Wright and a few other *WT* cronies, formed what Hoffman called "The Varnished Vultures," named for the stuffed capons with wine glaze that the group favored when dining on special occasions.

From 1927 until he left *Weird Tales* in 1935, Rankin illustrated stories for authors during the high point of the magazine's history. Besides illustrating Lovecraft, Clark Ashton Smith, Seabury Quinn, and Hoffman, he even illustrated a story by the then-unknown Tennessee Williams, "The Vengeance of Nitocris." In 1929 and 1930 he was alternating covers with Senf every month. He did his last *Weird Tales* cover December 1930, for Quinn's "The Wolf of St. Bonnot." But by the early thirties, Wright was employing newer artists including Brundage, who would come to dominate *Weird Tales* covers for most of the decade. Rankin continued to contribute interior drawings, but no longer illustrate whole issues as he had done, and some issues contained nothing by him. Among his final work at the magazine were interior illustrations for Robert E. Howard's "People of the Black Circle," a *Conan* story in three installments that began in September 1934. Previously Rankin had illustrated a number of Howard stories, perhaps most effectively "Skull-Face" in 1929, with its attenuated ghastly title character.

Around 1935, Rankin abruptly left Chicago and moved to California. The exact date is uncertain and his reasons for leaving remain unclear. Some have suggested a falling out with Wright as a reason, others that at almost sixty Rankin chose to retire and move to a warmer

climate. Years later while visiting Rankin in California, Price said, "I could have, but I did not wish to ask him as to his quitting *W.T.*,whether he had been underbidden, or had wrangled with the management." Price claimed he did not want to hear anything to mar happy memories of the good times the *Weird Tales* clique had enjoyed in the old days. Perhaps Rankin felt the same. It is easy to believe that working for *Weird Tales* with the camaraderie of the Varnished Vultures was fulfilling for him. As yet there is no record of whether he continued producing commercial art after moving to California.

When Price visited Rankin in 1952, the friends had not seen each other for nearly twenty years, although they had corresponded intermittently. Rankin, according to Price, never married and was living alone in a stucco house at 446 North Occidental in Los Angeles on a dead end street. He owned the house and though he no longer had a studio, his living room contained sketches and small sculptures of his own work and that of friends, along with rock samples and curious pieces of driftwood. The years had altered Rankin from the archetype adventure hero Price and Otis Adelbert Kline had modeled their hero after in a collaboration story "Thirsty Blades" for *Weird Tales* many years earlier. During the late-1930s and early '50s, Rankin had been sending friends hand drawn and tinted humorous cards at Christmas, signing them Hughie the Bald. Now the reason was apparent, all the thick hair had vanished, and his jowls and shoulders sagged. But he was cheerful and smiling. They shared some drinks—Rankin confessed he drank too much, Price said. They had a pleasant visit filled with nostalgic memories. Rankin seemed lonely and even extended an invitation for Price to share his house. Price declined, but departed with the intention of visiting his old friend more often, but he never did again.

Weird Tales folded in 1954. It lasted longer than all but a few pulps and became legendary in its field. Rankin's art had contributed to that legend. Its writers like Price and its illustrators were cast adrift to find new livelihoods. From his solitary house, Rankin continued to send old pals hand drawn Christmas cards full of humorous Santas, gnomes and elves, reminiscent of the work he had done in *Arabelle and Wiggelywumps*.

On January 3, 1956 Rankin was found dead in his house. The exact cause of death is not stated, and even the date is uncertain according to Price, who theorized he might have died a day or so earlier and was not discovered by a neighbor until the third. He lies buried in Section P, Site 515, at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego.

Near the end of Robert Louis Stevenson's tale, dark Hyde discovers he is unable to turn back into benign Jekyll. Although in his old age he was able to return in the hand drawn Christmas cards to cheerful illustrations of elves and gnomes, like Hyde who strikes deep in the memory compared to Jekyll, it is Rankin's *Weird Tales* work that remains vivid while his lighter illustration seems pallid by comparison.

—© 2008 by John Osier

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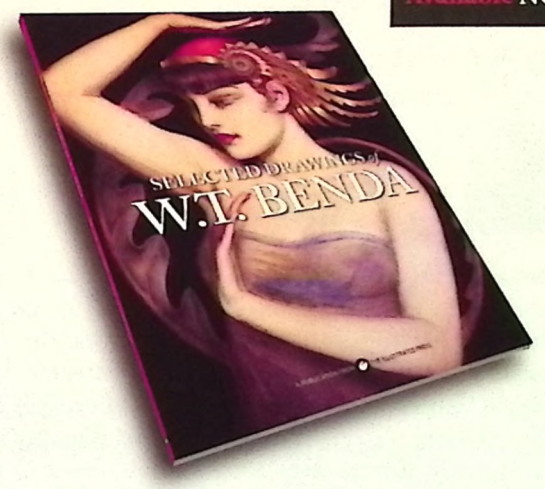

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Frank E. Schoonover (1877-1972) has long been recognized as one of the most important illustrators of his generation. (We featured his work in *Illustration* #7 way back in 2003.) A catalogue raisonné has been in production for some time, and is expected to be published in February of 2009. This spectacular two-volume set encompasses all of Schoonover's known works, and will feature over 3000 images—most of these in full color. The books will also feature a detailed biography, lists of exhibitions, and a checklist of the many magazines he illustrated. Comprehensive in scope, this set will stand as the pre-eminent record of Schoonover, his life and his work. (Note: the image above is not the cover of the book set.)

N.C. WYETH CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ SET

BY CHRISTINE BAUER PODMANICZKY
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SCALA PUBLISHERS, 2008

This comprehensive two-volume set provides detailed information on the works by N.C. Wyeth (1882-1945), one of America's foremost illustrators and fine artists. While it is well known that Wyeth illustrated many classic novels, he also made many other types of paintings...landscapes, still lifes, and portraits, in a wide variety of styles and techniques. This set of books features high quality, full-color reproductions, many shown at full-page or half-page size, and all are large enough to reveal great depth of color and detail. Nearly 2000 paintings are documented with a reproduction and history of ownership, publication, and exhibition. It was not known how many paintings this prolific artist had made until this research project was started 20 years ago.

Author Christine Bauer Podmaniczky is Associate Curator of N.C. Wyeth Collections at the Brandywine River Museum in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania. She has organised a number of exhibitions devoted to various aspects of Wyeth's work and is the author of several exhibition catalogues about the artist.

BRUSH WITH PASSION: THE ART AND LIFE OF DAVE STEVENS

EDITED BY ARNIE AND CATHY FENNER
288 PAGES, FULL COLOR
$50.95 HARDCOVER
UNDERWOOD BOOKS, 2008

An introduction to the career of beloved and influential comics artist, Dave Stevens. Encouraged by legendary creators like Jack Kirby, Milton Caniff, and Burne Hogarth, Stevens talks about his work as a storyboard artist for Michael Jackson's "Thriller" video and Steven Speilberg's *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, his days drawing comics, and the trials and tribulations of bringing his character to the big screen in the 1991 Disney film, *The Rocketeer*. Renowned for his pin-up art, Stevens is credited with revitalizing interest in, championing the rights of, and befriending the reclusive 1950s model Bettie Page, and he recounts their first meeting and subsequent adventures together—including a trip to the Playboy Mansion. Featuring a wealth of iconic drawings, paintings, and previously unpublished art, *Brush with Passion* also features commentary by comic book greats Richard Hescox, Michael William Kaluta, Jim Steranko, and William Stout.

AL WILLIAMSON'S FLASH GORDON: A LIFELONG VISION OF THE HEROIC

ESSAY BY MARK SCHULTZ, INTRO BY SERGIO ARAGONÉS
256 PAGES
$44.95 HARDCOVER
FLESK PUBLICATIONS, 2009

This new book collects all of acclaimed illustrator Al Williamson's strips for *Flash Gordon*. At 256 pages, it encompasses Williamson's three stints of depicting Flash in comic book format: the legendary King Comics stories from the 1960s, the 1980 adaptation of the Universal Flash Gordon motion picture, and the Marvel Comics miniseries of 1994. In addition to these classics of sequential storytelling, *Al Williamson's Flash Gordon* features Williamson's Flash drawings done for commercial illustration and prints, his assists on the *Flash Gordon* comic strip, a variety of Flash images contributed to amateur publications, and a selection of largely unpublished images spanning his interest in the character from childhood to the conclusion of his career.

JACKIE ORMES: THE FIRST AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN CARTOONIST

BY NANCY GOLDSTEIN
240 PAGES
$35.00 HARDCOVER
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS, 2008

Jackie Ormes: The First African American Woman Cartoonist chronicles the life of a multiply talented woman who became a successful cartoonist. Ormes's cartoon characters—Torchy Brown, Candy, Patty-Jo, and Ginger—delighted readers of African American newspapers such as the *Chicago Defender* and *Pittsburgh Courier* between 1937-56. This biography provides an invaluable glimpse into the history and culture of that era. As a member of Chicago's black elite, Ormes's social circle included leading political figures and entertainers of the day. People who knew her say that she modeled some cartoon

characters after herself as beautifully dressed and coiffed females, appearing and speaking out in ways that defied stereotyped images of blacks in the mainstream press. Ormes's politics, which fell decidedly to the left and were apparent to even a casual reader of her cartoons and comics, eventually led to her investigation by the FBI during the McCarthy era. In the late 1940s, Ormes (1911-85) transformed cartoon character Patty-Jo into a doll that is now a collector's item.

This book presents 131 of Jackie Ormes's cartoons and comic strips, some in color, some from original art work, and most digitally photographed from actual newspaper with only a few reproduced and restored from microfilm. Her topics include fashion, modern life, and human foibles, as well as racial injustice, foreign and domestic policy, educational equality, the atom bomb, and environmental pollution, among other pressing issues of those times, and indeed, of ours today.

EDWARD SOREL: THE MURAL AT THE WAVERLY INN

BY DOROTHY GALLAGHER
48 PAGES, FULL COLOR
$15.95 HARDCOVER
RANDOM HOUSE, 2008

The Waverly Inn has been a landmark in New York's Greenwich Village since the 1920s, and in 2006 Sorel was commissioned to paint a mural to grace its walls. Sorel chose forty Greenwich Village greats from the past 150 years and he painted them with great wit and charm.

Dylan Thomas, Anaïs Nin, Norman Mailer, Jackson Pollack, James Baldwin, Thelonious Monk, Eugene O'Neill, Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, Andy Warhol and many others are all here. This volume includes a foldout of the entire mural, and text discussing many charming insider jokes.

MODERN MASTERS VOLUME 19: MIKE PLOOG

BY ROGER ASH AND ERIC NOLEN-WEATHINGTON
120 PAGES, B&W, 8 PAGES FULL COLOR
$14.95 SOFTCOVER
TWOMORROWS, 2008

In the 1970s, horror comics were huge—and no one drew werewolves, swamp creatures, and demonic motorcyclists better than Mike Ploog! Though already well established in the fields of magazine illustration and animation, Ploog endeared himself to comics fans with his creepy yet beautiful artwork on such titles as *Werewolf by Night*, *Ghost Rider*, and *Man-Thing*. After a stint at Marvel Comics, Ploog returned to the world of animation and film, working on such classics as *Ghostbusters*, Ralph Bakshi's *The Lord of the Rings*, *Dark Crystal*, and *Labyrinth*. Now he's back in comics with the children's fantasies *Abadazad* and *The Stardust Kid*, as well as *The Spirit*, and proving he still has the chops. This book features a career-spanning interview and discussion of the artist's creative process, complete with both rare and unseen art, including a gallery of commissioned work, and an 8-page color section!

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EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

Annual Exhibition: Illustrators 51

January 7 through March 28, 2009
The Society of Illustrators, NY

The Museum of American Illustration at the Society of Illustrators presents the Annual Exhibition, *Illustrators 51,* featuring the works of over three hundred of today's top illustrators. From thousands of entries submitted worldwide, a jury of professional peers including illustrators and art directors have chosen the most outstanding works created throughout the year.

Beginning January 7 through March 28, 2009, the *Illustrators 51* exhibition is made up of three categorized shows: *The Sequential Exhibit* (January 7-January 24, 2009) features the year's best multi-image projects including animations by Bill Plympton, comics and graphic novels by John Hendrix, Jessie Hartland, Aya Kakeda, and many more! Original art commissioned by newspapers, magazines and books are on display during the *Editorial and Book Exhibit* (January 28-February 28, 2009). Featured artists include Sam Weber, Dan Adel, Yuko Shimizu, Jillian Tamaki, Kadir Nelson, Donato Giancola, among others. Artwork created for advertisements, CD covers, posters, greeting cards, and self-promotion are displayed in the *Advertising, Institutional and Uncommissioned Exhibit* (March 4-March 28, 2009). Artists include Marc Burckhardt, Jody Hewgill, Brad Holland, Frances Jetter, and others.

Medals and Certificates are awarded to the best illustrators, art directors and clients during the *Awards Gala and Opening Receptions* on January 16, February 6, and March 6, 2009. Tickets are on $30 for non-Society members and are available through the Society of Illustrators.

In conjunction with the exhibition is the published *Illustrators 51*, an impressive full-color annual showcasing all four hundred and fifty-one selected pieces. Today the annual has become the premiere directory of American and International illustration. It's the first print resource art directors look to for hot talent. This massive volume presents not only the years' finest illustration work, but also delves into the ideas behind the art as stated by the artists themselves. Each artist discusses the "how to" and "why" of their art, making this annual not only an impressive showcase, but also a look into the creative process of today's top working illustrators.

A selection of 40 works will also tour U.S. colleges through June 2010, marking the 28th educational traveling exhibition.

For more information, visit: www.societyillustrators.org

Double Lives: American Painters as Illustrators 1850–1950

December 10, 2008 through February 22, 2009
The New Britain Museum of American Art, CT

The NBMAA explores the often uneasy relationship between the art of easel painting and the art of illustration in an exhibition featuring the works of American artists who practiced both styles of painting between 1850 and 1950.

For more information, visit: www.nbmaa.org

Those Telling Lines: The Art of Virginia Lee Burton

March 24 through June 21, 2009
The Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, MA

Virginia Lee Burton (1909-1968) is best remembered as an award-winning author and illustrator of children's books, including *Mike Mulligan and His Steam Shovel* (1939), *The Little House* (1942), *Katy and the Big Snow* (1943), and *Song of Robin Hood* (1947). Burton's picture books often emphasize the continued utility and adaptability of older machines—and the traditions they represent—in a modern and fast-paced world, and a complementary sense of activity and industry fills her detailed illustrations.

In addition to her work in children's literature, Burton was also a designer, painter, print maker, and an integral member of the Folly Cove Designers, a collective of artists who created printed fabrics using hand-carved linoleum blocks. Through this often forgotten group, Burton produced fabrics with elaborate patterns, designs, and even pictorial story lines that are as delightful and as distinctive as her children's books, though far less well known. This exhibition is curated by Barbara Elleman.

For more information, visit: www.picturebookart.org

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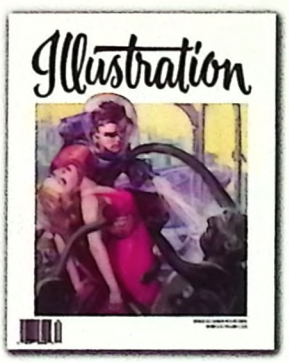

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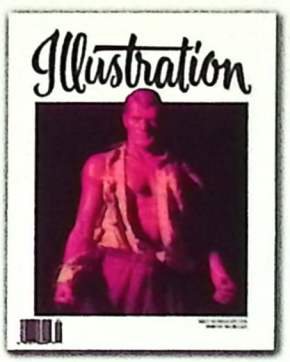

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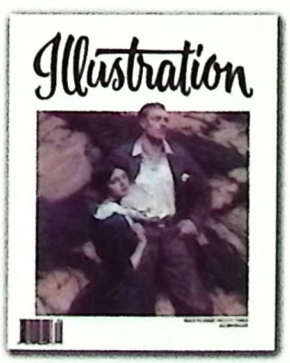

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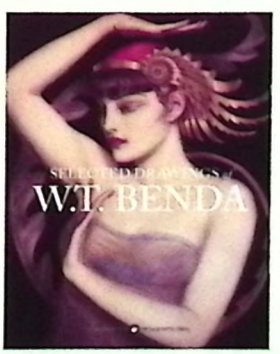

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